

POEMS

JOHN T. LECKLIDER



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POEMS

JOHN T. LECKLIDER



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*This Volume
is Respectfully Dedicated
to
the Good Friends
of My Native State*

PROEM

*From the fields of life I bring
What I have gathered.
More than individual
Must be the book that tells
The joys and sorrows
Successes and failures
The ambitions and defeats
The longings and desires
The aims and experiences
The loves and hopes
Of a single human life.*

*As the years come and go
Each one yearns, nay strives
To paint his own great pictures
To carve his own statues
Produce his own sweet music
Perfect his own judgments
To possess an ideal home
Choose and entertain his own friends
And be accounted honorable by
His neighbors, his town—state—nation
So rounded and complete are
The endowments of a human being
That the least and greatest,
Establishes his boundaries
According to his own Ideals.*

*Would it not be interesting to know
The harvest value of a human Life?
What lovely jewels—God, Master—Poet,
Author of vast Creation, offers
Each panting soul as the reward
Of development.*

PREFATORY THOUGHTS

Garments of thought from the loom of life
Woven of joy, sorrow and strife,
In patterns of morning and noonday light,
Shot with starbeams bordered by night.
Daily cullings of duties and cares,
Golden wheat and common tares
Born in the heart grown up in the brain
Offspring of rapture, love and pain
Earnest, spirituelle and plain.

Visions of rapture on mountain heights
Toil wrought tasks in the valley nights
Whisperings of angels from far off shores
Vision raptures and breaker roars.
Words of hope for the weary brain
Whispers of love for hearts in pain;
Blossoms plucked in duty's haste
Fountains found in the desert waste.

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POEMS

THE CERTAINTIES BEYOND

Just as of old the years are drifting on!
Death follows birth, as night the day.
Each generation dead, looked for the dawn
Which breaks at last upon the land of Hope,
Believed it near—then passed away.
Faith came to earth, abides on earth,
Ever anew lights all the paths of life,
That lead to promises that wait fulfillment.
Great truths, for which our spirits yearn
Obscured as yet, by doubts that hinder sight.

LAKE CLEAR

(Adirondacks, New York)

Often before my eyes I see
A vision sweet and dear to me,
A fountain spot in memory.

Lake Clear with all its coolness lies
Hemmed in with mountains, soft, blue skies,
Fresh fringed with summer draperies.

Far in thy crystal depths I see
Stars stagger in light revelry
When night winds wanton over thee.

Strange hillside tongues I hear repeat
Each sound that rolls beyond my feet,
'Till seven echoes are complete.

Beneath my steps I hear again,
Earth's crust, with hollowness complain
Like Elfin sounds beside some main.

Angling for trout, like Walton old,

Along thy inlets icy cold,
Burns-like admire their spots of gold.

The day declines and near thy shore
Batrachians call to sport galore
Again, I bag a good three score.

Thus, memory blest—I evermore,
With friends enjoy glad days of yore
With Otis, by thy charming shore.

FLIGHTS OF CUPID

Out of the hitherward, into the yon
Love is ever trailing;
The hearts are happy that love lights on,
O, would to my heart he were sailing.

Butterfly-like he comes and goes
Visiting every mart
Here fed on the daintiest bliss earth knows
There wrecked in some passionate heart.

On highest and lowest mundane lives,
He favors and kisses bestows,
Regardless of color and beauty he thrives;
Life in hovel and palace he knows.

The butterfly's home is the perfect rose,
Where sweetest nectar is found
So the heart you see must sincere be
Which love calls holy ground.

SUNRISE AT SEA

Out of the startled east
On the billowy breast of the sea
Morning dropped through a sparkling mist

That jeweled the world for me.

Night's grimness fled away
As the water mirrored the sun
And ripples of laughter ran riot in play
'Till the whole sea frolicked in fun.

And I said; I behold, O, sea!
Your temper is not so bad;
At peace with storms you smile like me
When the sun shines sweet and glad.

O, wonderful lessons of dawn!
Will surroundings change us so?
When each in judgment stands,
Will the whiteness of the Great White Throne
Make whiter our earthstained hands?

THE LOVERS

By joyous streams thru orange groves,
Two lovers strayed together;
'Twas eventide, out peeped the moon
In autumn's glorious weather.
He held her gently by the hand,
He kissed her red lips lightly
They sang and laughed and talked of love,
As lovers yet do nightly.
Sub-Tropic suns had filled their hearts
With pleasure's sparkling wine,
Kind nature gave them every grace
Greek-Myths accord the nine.
The nightingale whose happy song,
Unfinished with the day,
Poured only one of all glad strains
That swelled about their way.

In full accord is moon and tide,

World energies are with them,
So love and nature are in bonds,
Potential laws unite them.
O, happy hearts in youthful prime,
Brimful of dreams of pleasure,
Adrift upon the stream of time
In rhythmic sweetest measure.
O, youth thy current is a rill,
O, life thy stream's a river
What argosies of good and ill
Thou dost to age deliver.

MEN OF ACTION

When I think of the great ones of earth
And the wonderful things they could do
Fighting, writing and loving,
Getting and giving too;
How little seems the millions,
How big the unit or two.
When I think of the golden opinions
They won from women and men,
I'm glad there's but one in a million,
Instead of a possible ten.
But ever this painful question
Is present with me, with you.
Why should such vast power
Be given to one or two?
For we have hearts for loving,
Have hands for giving too;
But we lack the art of getting
And fighting we cannot do.
So we lose the golden opinions
That strength receives for dower,
Since the trumpets of the ages,
Blow only for place and power.
And so the impoverished millions
That constitute the state

Are as only ready material
For the buildings of the great;
And the history of a nation
Is the biography of the few
Who simply plan for the millions,
Enormous work to do.
It was so with the nations perished,
It is so with the present day;
The masses always labored
But their honors, where are they?
I am glad in that better judgment
They will call us one by one
And know us by what we purposed
Rather than what we have done.
Who declared in the Jewish Temple
When massive gifts were told
That the humble gift of the widow's mite
Was more than the rich man's gold
Will in no wise err in His judgment,
Of the humble or the great,
For He noteth the fall of a sparrow
As well as the potentate.

THE YOUNG MAID'S SOLILOQUY

To whom can I go for counsel?
I know I can go to the Lord,
But at times we need help that is human,
From our fellows a comforting word.
So young, (for as yet I'm not twenty)
Unschool'd in the world and its ways
Of society friends I have plenty
Insincere and conventional jays.
The ball room is giddy and flirty—
Society's heartless and queer
I long for a friend that is hearty
For a love in the flesh that's sincere.

In pairs, male and female created,
O, where can my partner have strayed,
Shall I find him, why so long belated,
Are we distant, was love sightless made?
About me how swiftly they marry
"Bound to discord and strife" it is said;
How long on the way will he tarry
The man, whom I am to wed?
An actor? no, such would deceive me;
Free from guile and deceit is my heart
Let him show me his soul, let him know me,
Undeceived then, we never shall part.

I know not myself, wise counsel I need
To preserve the sweet joys of the heart;
A mistake to regret and ruin may lead,
Experience should wisdom impart.
Every trade has its guilds and teachers,
Social warnings and lectures refined;
For hereafter a book with its preachers,
Marriage oft is a chance taken blind.
O, mothers your daughters need training,
E're they wifehood and motherhood meet;
O, fathers your sons need teaching
To make manly roughness more sweet.

If the savage consort with the tender,
There'll be friction and torture refined;
Why not grow brides and grooms for each other
Strong bodied and suited in mind?
Dogs, pigeons and stock are fostered,
Each pedigree guarded with care;
While chance fathers children unheeded,
Whose lives run to waste everywhere.
Yet man, boastful chief of creation,
Chases everything under the sun;
A savage on earth on probation,
A savage calls cruelty fun.

Wise Sparta grew soldiers and mothers,
Women suited for warriors' wives.
Why not grow brides and grooms for each other
Cheating chance out of spoiling two lives.
I long for a husband true, human,
Yet, a man flesh and soul must he be—
Two natures have I, I am woman,
Daily food for both natures give me.

WHO CAN ANSWER?

Can any one go back to God and say,
I kept the inner chart thou gavest me,
Conscience inviolate, all acts approved,
Within the limits of thy plan I lived?
Since I awoke on earth, I know my story.
The strength of evil has shivered many
A stout lance of boasted virtue.
This web of life was braided of light
And shadow in that great night, before
I met the fitful dawn of days.
I know not if I lived or dreamed
Before I came to earth.
Since launched upon the stream of time
I've steered by hope and faith,
And love, whose eyes presage another dawn,
When earth shall own no grave.

WATCHMAN! WHAT OF THE TIMES?

The gates of life swing wider now,
Great days are ushered in.
Earth's shadows lift—
Light clears the brow
As truth's great world is seen.

No kingdom may we call our own
Till reverent reason dawns.

Wisdom must mystery disown
And duties paths make plain
E're real days begin.

SHELF MARKED

In our looms of daily thought
Is life's many patterns wrought.
Daily schooling, drill and plan
Mark some character of man.
Politics and party strife
Weave the bias goods of life.
Every trade, profession, clan,
Stamps, impresses, labels man
Each with some reproach per se
Peter thy speech betrayeth thee.
It is sadly true of every one
Who's smaller than the job he's on.

CAPTIVES HERE, FREEMEN OVER THERE

I walk with nature hand in hand
My country is the favored land
Of mirth and song,
Bold, lion hearted, eagle winged
The freeman's soul is fain to sing
The heart's desire.

Wisdom's a sun whose clearing light
Scatters life's doubts and shades of night
As men mount higher.
Desires are wings to wingless men,
To speed them to earth journey's end
With souls on fire.

UNDER LAW

Noiseless, mighty as God's will,
Sunlight falls on vale and hill,
Earth feels resurrection power,
Nature wakens tree and flower.

Man, central thought of nature's plan,
Immortal souled, flesh life a span,
Ever ascending fears no bound,
Life's outmost peaks are wisdom crowned.

SHE TOLD HER LOVE

The night wind sweet and cool
Is fanning my fevered brow,
She has told her love
To the roving wind
And the wind is telling me now.

My heart is full of bliss,
My thoughts are wild with joy,
She has told her love
To the roving wind,
Her love, so shy and coy.

The heavens are soft with light,
Bright stars and great round moon,
Though sundered afar
Her spirit is near
My Soul's in a blissful swoon.

Sweet fragrance is on the air,
The earth with bloom is bright,
For love, sweet love's
On the roving wind,
Our souls have met tonight.

THE CALL TO DUTY

A voice is in my ear,
That melts my heart;
To scenes far off and dear
It calls me and I start
To tread the past again
The paths sweet, simple, plain.

BEYOND THE STARS

Once I loved and life
Was rosy with its light
Streams of bliss poured in
Upon me day and night.

Lofty aspirations filled me
Toil and sorrow hid away,
Great achievements filled my future
Life's best joy ruled each day.

Dreams of life lay bright before me,
Fields of promise rich and wide,
Hand in hand through paths of glory,
Love and hope led groom and bride.

But my vision paled and wasted,
Left a great pain in my heart,
Ever since death's surly winter
Chills my soul; will not depart.

See a pale face floats before me,
Laughter dead upon its lips,
And life's hopes are broken, shattered,
Wrecked and lost like stately ships.

Yet my soul on Petrel pinions,

Soars 'bove storms and broken spars,
Joy life's quest shall gain fruition
In love's home beyond the stars.

SEEKING WISDOM

The ghosts of the wisdom of Egypt of old,
Rise dim in her ruins, a story well told.
The splendor of Athens where brains had a mart,
Lives a dream of the past in legend and art.
Thinkers, great swordsmen carved out mighty Rome
What is left of her grandeur save ruin and gloom?
From greatest to least man immortal would be
In thought, word and act, quite plainly we see.
Old nations warred, toiled to put error to rout,
Erred, reformed, reformed 'till toil wore them out.
Crumbs of truth, flakes of wisdom are all we find
Any nation or man after life left behind.
Though earnest the struggle, the end well defined;
Aims fail of their purpose spite of muscle and mind.

It is true, clearly true redeemed from all doubt
There's a limit on earth to what man brings about.
With thoughts half mastered we labor in vain—
Discouraged to others at last turn for gain.
Thus we resort the thoughts born in the brain
Of the dead of past ages, ever seeking their aim.
Our wealth's but collections, specimens parts
Of man's boasted find in the field of lost arts.
Aye, we love simple things because they are best,
Laugh at artless child wit with heartiest zest.
There's no songs like heart songs, old or new,
Truth never grows old, the immortal is true.

The streams of affection that visit man's heart
Are as pure and fresh as they were at the start.
Man never grows old while his brain and his heart,
Are fed by the currents of love, wisdom and art.
Some factors are constant then, plainly we see;
To life on this planet law limits each me.
Much is false, short lived, sinks into the mould,
Like flowers and buds killed by autumn winds cold.
We consider life's waste, then shrink into doubt,
Lest the world may not prize what we think about.
Original truth is more precious than gold,
Than pearls is harder to find
No realm in the aggregate shows such wanton waste
As the efforts of heart and mind.

Truth needs no interpreter, yet history shows
It's no sooner revealed than commentators disclose
The wise things and learning (which we are told)
Throws light on it, making it clear to behold.
The result is discussion, faction and strife
With creed fostering clans ever injuring life.
Only wisdom baptized at the fountain of truth
Holds its own in this world, has perennial youth.
Get learning, get wisdom, get all that you can,
Science wards not fate's storms
From the creature called man.

INVOCATION

I pray not for stateliest power
To speak, write or sing like the few
Who o'erleap this low world with its sorrow
And stage through the infinite blue.
While here on earth's restless bosom
Where thy creatures forever make moan,
Let me serve e'en the humblest blossom
Assured thou the service will own.

Let me sing as one sang to "A Mousie"
Let thy "Daisies" so speak to me too
Let me see, let me hear nature's voice
Back of all let me see and hear you.
Add strength to each frail, fleeting power;
Each day some new joy, please to give
Make feet, hands, swift skilled for service;
A true man in the flesh let me live.

To my hopes ever add a new luster,
Make each promise more clear to my sight;
Mists of doubt and uncertainty scatter
Ever lead me from darkness to light.
Make solid the shores of that country
Like this, we are journeying thru;
Men are weak in their ankles and stumble,
Speak, courage and strength give me too.

In the span which to me is allotted
In the paths where I walk, slip or fall,
Help me find out and ponder life's meaning,
Gain wisdom and wait for Thy call.
Though my life may be simple and humble
Though my name and my grave be obscure
May the lives I have touched remember
A friend and a brother passed here.

MESSENGERS OF THE BRAIN

Beautiful thoughts they come and go,
Like childhood friends in the long ago.
From flights in space they visit the brain,
Perch, take wing and return again.
They visit the sun that warms the earth
Drink at the fountains of hope and mirth.
Our darkest dungeons they fill with light;
From heaviest hearts they chase the night.
Receive them kindly, they are sent to be

Ministering angels of good to thee.
They clothe the soul as with ermine white,
In garments of grace from the looms of right,
And at last, the soul by their power, is
Transfigured into immortal bliss.
"As man thinks in his heart so is he,"
Thought is the parent of destiny.

KNOWN BY WHAT WE HAVE DONE

No candle burns however pale its light
But helps 'to brighten earth's receding night.
When passed is superstition, doubt and fear,
Truth gained, the mind shall be more clear!
Diviner life slowly asserts its reign,
Comfort, O Soul, good efforts are not vain.

CREED AND PERSECUTION

A traveler in a thirsty land
A little pool of water found
It slumbered sweetly, crystal clear,
For sheltering rocks rose all around.
He took his staff and stirred the pool.
Lo! soon 'twas foul and turbid too,
Where sun and stars once glassed themselves
No eye could now its murk see thru.
Seized by an angry dervish mob
The traveler to the judge was led
Charged with pollution of the pool;
He unabashed, "Not guilty!" plead.
The witnesses were called and sworn
And swiftly fixed on him the guilt,
Told how the pool was clear at morn,
And how accused corrupted it.

With placid mien the traveler heard
The proven penalty of guilt

Who so corrupts a drinking place
Shall forfeit life, his blood be spilt.
The judge was patient, just and kind,
Assured the traveler firmly spake—
I thrust this staff deep in the pool
But ivory naught can filthy make.
The sides the bottom of the pool
Were thick with mud and dregs of time
On which the crystal water lay
Till action made all foul with grime.
Just like the fountain creeds of men
In reason's cup deemed sweet, pure, plain,
Revered for ages, held undoubtingly
None dreaming of the dregs therein.

At last a greater teacher comes,
Of mightier faith, simple, more wise,
Opens new fountains in the fields of truth
Lo, turbid are the wells men used to prize;
Impurity has not been introduced
A wisdom higher, broader but revealed—
A clearer light to the same eyes if used
Shows old deformities before concealed.

Within yon pool the waters you deem sweet
Lay clear and clean, were pure to taste to sight,
I naught polluted, I questioned what I met;
Lo! to your dervishes—I changed the light.
Ignorance aroused, leads persecution
Raging as if wronged—not that the new
Is not better, but because the old betrays
Its grime and imperfections too.
Ignorance, superstition poured a bitter tide
Of persecution into faith's sheltered pool;
Then, being weary, left hate and jealousy

To precipitate the cruel dregs,
Of passion's narrow school.
The holiest faith is kept in earthen vessels
And undisturbed by bigotry is clear and sweet,—
Like mud-rimmed quiet wayside puddle
Reflecting sun and starry heavens complete.

But he who looks when Huguenots are fleeing
Sees faith's pure pool begrimed with passion's dirt
And knows that zealot persecution pursues
The innocents to do them hurt.
And yet, the fiercest creed mankind doth own
If to its altars all will come, bow down;
Each creed is broad enough (in its own way)
To save the vilest who will own its sway.
No broader charity our race can boast
Than shows in creed, each calls O, human host
Accept our faith—take seat among the blest!
Earth's vilest penitent need not be lost.

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL

Why can't people all be good,
Kind and sweet in every mood?
Aye they could be if they would.
Love and justice helps us all,
Least and greatest, short and tall
Why laugh at a neighbor's fall?

Over heavy is many a load,
Slight and jest wield bitter goad,
Why not give each half the road?
Earth is roomy, life is sweet,
Cruel hearts are incomplete
Mercy show to all you meet.

One heart's product, who can know?
Tares and wheat in one soil grow,

Only wheat then let us sow.
Getting gain is not all of life;
Nothing sweet results from strife;
Death is combat knife to knife.

Look and word and simplest act,
Life's result, a sum exact.
Helpful, hurtful, what is the fact?
There is good enough in every heart
If encouraged from the start,
To outweigh life's bitter part.
Let us then with candor live,
Learn to take as well as give,
Live and help our neighbor live.

THE CENTRAL MIND

I was restless, eager, strong in my youth;
Fully determined fame to win and ultimate truth.
Truth, I often thought I had it;
Firmly grasped and held secure.
But how soon it lost its luster;
Changed its form and essence pure;
Played Chameleon, lastly vanished,
Broke my heart and left no cure;
While through nature, truth I hunted to secure.
But the reason I discovered, if traced back
Truth through nature is distorted, 'tis a fact
In the sun each man must stand,
If he'd see the solar system rightly planned.
So too, each mind must find the central mind;
In God must rest,
Before he sees Truth's living fields
In order dressed.
God central sun of soul and mind
Throws light upon
The human mind and is its sun.

WHEN I GET HOME

Once I was there and baby skies
Covered the whole circle of my life.
I lived on love; care
Answered all my cries
And shut away earth's bitterness and strife.

Manhood soon came,
I heard the call to come
And join the fray the world forever fights.
The trump of fame
First heard is welcome,
Though it blows for paltry rights.

Ambition plants her seedlings
In our fresh young blood,
To choke and cheapen everything that fails;
It humbles and narrows the dwellings
Known in childhood,
And on age a backward longing it entails.

I sigh for faces
Full of sweetest light,
That cheered me once, as morning cheers the land;
Warm hearts, bright faces
Now beyond my sight,
While I alone twixt hope and memory stand.

Cheated and wasted
By life's feverish haste,
I've reaped few harvests in the lengthened past,
Faith points my eyes where final rights are vested
In fadeless faces and in friends that last.

When I get home, O, haste the happy day,
Restore my loved ones to my waiting heart.
Flesh awkwardness

Mars all we do or say
Where, wrapped in shadows, life is lived apart.

When I get home
And know as I am known,
Earth's dark glass broken and the dimness gone,
Faults all condoned,
Full confidence enthroned;
I shall be satisfied when I get home.

MAN WAS NOT MADE TO MOURN

I garner no care and I borrow no sorrow;
Why should I burden myself with pain?
Life was meant to be sweet, a dream of pleasure;
Happy day, each tomorrow should bring again.

Why should men struggle and toil for treasure
That cankers life's cares, eroding the brain?
Man's physical needs tho many are simple,
Let us joy in the sunshine, rejoice in the rain.

Why fret and jostle and crowd each other
Through each week and each month of the year
To gain a few baubles, some gold hoard away,
Then to die sour hearted in fear.

There is plenty of sunshine to go around and spare
And earth's fresh air is forty miles deep
Of seed time and harvest the maker takes care,
Life's provisions are bountiful, cheap.

To wear out or rust out, man never was meant,
By his talents most clear may be seen;
Life in leisure, in labor and study, if spent
Gains health, wealth, beauty, wit keen.

All nature the flowers, the birds and the bees

Adapt life to climate with gracefulest ease;
Change of season to man is a boon, you will own,
Spicing life with a zest in each different zone.

Monotony only occurs where a man
Looks exclusively long on, but part of a plan,
The mountains and valleys, the plain and the sea,
Days of storm, nights of stars, are variety's plea.

Man may look out on nature and revel in love;
Or if nature's o'er cast, he may visit above;
May choose like flowers the dew and the light;
But it never was meant, he should sink into night.

The soul grows in winter as well as in summer,
Mid absence of flowers and joyous song,
Life was meant to be lived without fret or murmur,
Night, day, rest, action make it grow strong.

Then why garner care and why borrow sorrow?
Why should we burden ourselves with pain?
Life was meant to be sweet, a dream of pleasure,
Happy day, each tomorrow should bring again!

OLD AND NEW

I have often thought
I should like to speak
And give the people my views,
But a present fear
Ever held me in check,
The fear it might not be news,
Or be error, instead of the truth.
For the worthiest scientist,
Learned as he is, fathers
Many a dictum that's false;
The philosopher's logic frequently is
More worthless than dumpings of dross.

Even wise schoolmen's teachings,
Great thoughts in their way
Are mortal as plainly we see.
They perish as fashion, fads of a day,
Short lived, lacking merit to stay.
Unnumbered the books,
Dead, thrown aside,
Crowded out by the latest, the true,
That suffer decay as leaves of the wood
To be followed again by the new.
Life, continuing problem, new to old,
Develops by action, hearing things told,
It must be so, infant born and taught,
Experience gained, hard struggles fought,
Earth's passing sons will buffet and praise
The fads of fashion, man's labor and plays;
For growth each has room, each room for his say,
A crown waits on worth at the end of each day.

AFTER THE NUPTIALS

On my face friends say there's a shadow,
In my heart I know there's an ache
So young, scarcely out of my mayday,
Sure to grief life is early awake.

A haze dims at times the eyes seeing
From the vale of the heart, mists of pain
Hang over the soul, as in summer
On mountains clouds gather and rain.

So late life was brimful of pleasure,
My soul bathed in hope at high tide;
Disappointment has changed the sweet measure
Love died, when I knew him as bride.

The law says we are one, two a unit,
So unlike, is it submission or strife?

Trees in winter live on—can that be it,
Only winter the rest of my life?

No! No! I will smile in his absence
Will sing till my heart's summer glad;
Self-conquered will then, bear his presence,
He surely is not wholly bad.

He has faults, many faults, am I perfect?
No! our schooling's been equally bad
The dainty, the timid are apt to expect
Too much from the average grown lad.

After fame, merged in business, strong
And self-willed the lord of creation, a man,
To further his purpose drives things along
Unmindful of aught save his plan.

I will find the ideal his brain and his heart,
Have enshrined in their innermost fold;
I'll become what he thought me; the part
Of his life, when he chose me, thought me pure
gold.

I'll conform to his wants as an animal should,
He reigning husband, I will reign wife;
Mind matching mind, our world shall be ruled
With no servile descent to the low plain of strife.

Our faults and virtues shall common appear
'Till faults are evolved from physical life
Then neither need reign, or prate about sphere;
For he shall be husband and I shall be wife.

THE UBIQUITY AND WASTE OF LIFE

God sows the earth with human life,
As a farmer broadcasts grain,
Each struggles to'ard the end of strife,
Thru sunshine, storm and rain.

The seed may drop in goodly soil,
Or fall by the wayside bare,
May feed the birds, or blight may spoil
Or fruit for the kings own fare.

So man is dropped in every zone
On island, land and sea
But if he grows, must win a home
For self and family.

Igloo, Teepee or Manor Hall
May house a babe at birth ,
That lives to age or dies in youth,
Worthless or full of worth.

Wide is the waste where'er the eye
Earth's fields of life discern,
Wise fostering care and cruel waste
Law rules with unconcern.

Sweet over all abounding grace
And tender love is shown,
His plan includes the human race
Aim high and reach a throne.

THE TOILER

How monotonous, common and little
Most lives on this planet have been.
Did we live before we came hither,

Will a fuller life ever begin?
Around all the people seem common
Are alike as the days and the years
Hard toilers on levels low, human,
Dowered equal with joys and fears.

Great statesmen all live at a distance,
Great authors are all bound in books,
The soul has a scant, hard existence,
There is sameness in clothing and looks.
Sun to sun is the measure of labor
For shelter and three meals a day
An evening sometimes with a neighbor
Rest and pleasure are scanty, our way.

Life and state questions all come to us,
Perplex us and harry us too,
It's this way and that way schools teach us
False theories outnumber the true.
We toil, we achieve, we are victors.
Life goes on with its clatter and grind
Rejoice, no toiler is hopeless.
Conscious greatness in effort all find.

Few questions in this world are settled,
To be answered, they come day by day.
From each is an answer expected
To the questions we face on our way.
We toil we achieve we are victors—
Unknown and nameless quite true—
Like the soldiers of old, the king's lictors;
Mostly nameless—fame fathers so few.

The tasks of the world are heavy
Cruel masters are numerous too;
The life of each toiler's made dreary
With a task that will never be through.
We delve and we toil for the nation!

For the people dig graves and plant yew.
Few, few roll in wealth, have position,
Strange, the mass ever shouts for the few.

Great leaders of men have their frailties
The mass blindly follows the few
Often hid by a mask, the real face is,
Actors oft make the false seem the true.
So blindly we toil, trust and follow,
While the spoils are shared by the few
We murmur, we toil, yet are victors,
Are victors in spite of the few.

GOD WALKS EVERY SEA

With the prow of my ship
Toward the land of Hope
I shall sail and sail
But ever the far away
Recedes, to land I fail
Yet my heart keeps stout
With the love I meet
As I go on.
Earth's evenings and mornings
Ever are sweet to look upon.

Though real our dreams
May never become
Let us murmur not.
God's daily gifts for us
Are best, though we choose not.
Though in fancy's ships we drift
Afar, far out on some
Uncrossed sea;
From love and care we can never
Be lost for, God walks every sea.

SPIRIT HOSPITALITY

A soul was host to my soul one day,
At a Royal Feast of thought, the whole
Sweet, delicate, pure as the truths
The incarnate teacher taught.
Our lamps of life in heart, in brain burn bright,
Like light revealing sun and stars, to common sight,
Warming this chill earth where we live
Till sometimes it is blossom bright.
The feast was royal, yet simply served;
No show or clatter of plate observed;
Mind's native products of fruit and bread,
From experience and larder of learning were spread.
The courses each, were of facts the best,
Gleanings of discontent and rest
From highest down to simplest.
Our consomme, broth of joys that die
When youth dreams visit no more life's sky.
Stern truths were our meat, with hunger blest
Garnished with wit the daintiest.

Our pickles, mustard, and olives green
Were the sour yield of what might have been.
Wisdom the waitress, shy sweet maid,
Served largess of pastries, none mislaid,
Ripe berries of hope, by good will brought,
Were served as dessert with the cream of thought.
Our wine, heart vintage, the purest earth sees,
(Such as never grows stale or sinks to the leas),
Slaked our thirst, as some cool spring at dawn
Refreshes the life of a hunter chased fawn.

It was June, sweet season of leaf and bloom,
Rare beauty graced all that was said;
Life fragrance sent up its sacred perfume,
At this feast of the heart and the head.
We talked of the past, of paths we had trod,

Of hope and defeat, of the great love of God,
Of birth and life's ultimate goal,
Of dreams of the future; the slow growth of good;
The perils of living; the tides in the blood;
Speech blossomed like prayer in each soul.
In bodies Plebeian here, royal souls reign,
Yet ancestry of spirit in this life shows plain.
Flesh at times feels the power of glory to come—
Beauty of holiness smites sometimes each home.

A LOST FRIEND

I would wreathe my cup of sorrow today,
O, bring me an evergreen bough;
Tho love lights my soul with beautiful ray
Yet I weep o'er a lost friend now.

I know each cup must be drained some day
To the bottom, so bitter and black,
The sorrows of life are tapers they say,
Hope lights when the lost comes back.

My life was full of the beautiful,
Till I lost thy sweet face from my sky,
Now silent and still I wonder at will
And the empty world whispers, why? why?

TO A PRUDE

Are you waiting, are you waiting,
Are your sweet lips yet unkissed,
Are you still love's promise keeping
Are you faithful to your tryst?

Swift the long years have been flying
Graying hair and dimming sight;
Is your heart in silence crying,

Will my true love come tonight?

Faultless man and perfect lover
You demanded in your youth
Men are clay the whole world over
None are perfect, sad the truth.

Day to day a sweet speech utters,
Night to night doth knowledge show
Life is fleeting, you're in fetters
To a folly fast or slow.

This is earth—beyond is heaven!
Live this life the earthly way,
Loyal to it don't abuse it
Wisdom clothes each soul in clay.

Patient wait till you reach heaven
The spirit place prepared for you
Pure soul air, flesh cannot breathe it
Why spoil this and that life too?

Patient learn earth's common lessons,
Duty daily waits on you,
Finish earth tasks, go to heaven,
When you've nothing else to do.

THOUGHTS ON CREATION

(After Reading Hugh Miller's Works)

Some thinkers who were doubters,
Others, mighty men of faith,
Through geologic wonders
Each blazed a several path.
Some marveled at creation,

Christened Nature, Child of Time,
Faith shouted to the end of ways,
Earth's Maker is Divine!

It must be so, whate'er befell,
Creation was a miracle,
Fully recorded—note the fact—
The record's equal to the act.
In rocky volumes fold on fold.
Thru centuries igneous, vaporous, cold,
A faithful record has been kept,
Before man came and while he slept,
In beetling cliff and rocky fold.
We read the record clear and old,
From tertiary to Silurian,
From radiate Mollusk up to man.
Earth's fauna-dawn marked by a star;
Of starry type first creatures were.
Not chance—this star in Nature's plan,
Star blazoned came the Son of Man;
For not alone in shales and mould,
In glacial beds and bogs that hold
Great coal deposits; slaty fold;
In bones and caves, and finds of old
Is creation's story told.

The night of chaos heard the living word,
"Let there be light!" It was the Lord.
The primal elements, Law gript at birth,
Creation staggered not in coming forth.
Order established, the whole plan defined,
In unions primal elements combined.
Each simple factor was an agent sent
To do his will, accomplish his intent.
To each its duty wisdom preassigned,
His voice its law, from atom to mankind.
Man, favored one, created with a mind,
Law unto self, above earth's common kind.

From lowest cell, up, up, pray scan
A flawless wisdom marks the plan;
No breaks, no leaps, no chasms wide,
No unbridged gulfs have been descried
Along the long creative way
From formless night to finished day.
Simple to complex, rising yet,
A gradient scale doth upward set,
Broad, perfect plans from base to top,
Creation widens grandly, moving up.
It starts with chaos and ascends,
But no man knoweth where it ends.
For earth is but a little world
'Mongst countless planets orbit hurled.
Man on probation ever restless here,
His spirit thirsting for some other sphere.
Verdure with thallogens begins
Ending with forest exogens.
From radiates on, past quadrupeds,
Each kingdom filled with wondrous breeds,
From living atoms to vast saurians,
Each in its order came, and followed on
Enriched from work by predecessors done.
Tho some place microbes under ban,
Asserting they were made to injure man.
Instinct unerring—if you please—
Wild natures follow, none deceives.
No error marks the Maker's plan,
At least before creating man.

Man came with hope and inspiration,
The crowning creature of creation,
Free to ascend to heights divine
Or herd below as common kine.
Birds build their nests, nor reason why,
Build perfect first time—never try
To improve the comfort or the health
Nor theorize on style or wealth,

With native sense of sanitation
They need no tips from civilization.
They do not toil, just build and sing,
Untroubled about nest or song;
Their impulse is the joy of spring,
Nature's great heart beats kind and strong.
No sullen worker mars the throng.
Man freely theorizes this or that,
Toils and destroys, destroys and builds,
To attain the perfect labors, wills.
Tries theory this and theory that,
Till courage fails or reason wins.
Chooses, discards—is child of doubt—
Dreams of a life to be fairer than this;
Refuses present joy for next life's bliss.
He studies Nature to find Heaven out.
Marching life's pathway thru creation, still
Leads to the temple of love's sovereign will.

O, searcher after truth, move up, move on
Until life's goal is gained,
Hope's promise seldom comes to naught
When every nerve is strained.
Endowed with trust and earnest faith
That we shall live beyond earth's death;
To make for sin some expiation,
What toils we do, what pains we bear,
Heedless our loss of pleasure here.
Aspiring to some other sphere
Where life, that here owns scarce a day
Goes on forever—spurns decay.
Man toils and troubles from his birth
A painful worker on the earth;
Bold critic, questioner of creation,
Proud boaster of a civilization
Oft retrogression marks his way,
Tho forward striving hard to go,

With soul unrest he's troubled so—
About some future state, it is true,
If death ends all, he cannot enter into.

Expectant one, sad, sad 'twill be
If life hereafter's not for thee,
If prayer's unheard; if faith's a lie;
Mission's a failure; hope a cry.
What toil, forethought, and preparation
Goes waste, if vain is expectation
About one's self, and every nation.
Such loss makes loss an aggregation
Too painful for just contemplation.

Shall God keep faith with other creatures
And not with man who bears his features?
Shall bee and dormouse lay in store
Supplies if winter comes no more?
Instinct or reason—just the same—
Both from one common author came.

THE GOOD IS ALWAYS IN SIGHT

The stream of trouble runs always full,
Its current flows deep and wide.
Life's good, life's evil, are the banks
That lie on either side.
Adrift on the current or stranded in ill,
Whenever you long for the right,
Lift your eyes and look to the other bank,
The good is always in sight.

THOU SPEAKEST TO ME

When truth breaks in the quickened conscience
starts,

Dear Lord, thou dwellest in believing hearts;

Thou speakest to me.

Thru spirit, nature, sun and stars apart,

Thy life in death, thy lessons reach the heart,

Thou speakest to me.

Above the roar of life, thy voice still and small

Visits each conscience with potential call;

Arise, be free, O, child of God!

Thy father speaks to thee.

ARCTIC LOVERS

As the needle seeks the pole

So in love soul seeketh soul.

Across the white wide waste of snow

The wild wind sobbing went

While pallid stars to cheer the night

Thru silent space their ghostly light

On waste of ice, and wealth of snow

In blinding dimness sent.

With swift reindeer, all clad in fur

His sweetheart bound to see;

A fearless lover bold of heart

Sped o'er an icelike sea.

A distant light, (unseen as yet)

Already cheered his heart

For by it with a gentle face

His sweetheart stood apart.

Each felt life's ruddy current swell

And of the other thought;

Sweet telepathic messengers
To each love's message brought.
The auroral light in rosy beams
Glowed as the dawn when near
And like the Lark his heart awoke
Love's song rose sweet and clear.

"Wild is the trail over the snow
My sweetheart's lodge doth my reindeer know.
Winter hath locked in ice the streams;
My heart is so warm with love, it seems
The winter must go, the north-land streams
In beauty shall flow like summer-land dreams.
Melt treasures of snow, O, winds of the north
Blow warm, break forth in zephyrs sweet and low;
I am nearing my heart's desire
Nearing my love I know.
I am nearing her icy home—
The gray wolf follows my heels
Wild is the trail I roam
No hunger no cold your lover feels:
His courage is true and tried
And his heart grows warm
As he nears his bride.
As the needle seeks the pole
I seek my bride, my soul,
My summer-soul in the north."

He ceased; the song committed to air.
She stood in her ice thatched home
Smoothing her tresses of hair.
She stood in her distant home
Simple and sweet and meek
The unheard song had come
Thru leagues of wintry air,
Its welcome glowed on her cheek,
Its spell was thrilling her there.

"A soul touched mine"—she sighed,
"Thoughts burn in my brain, burn my ear—
Give words, sweet words, to my speech
Is my lover afar or near?
Yet his presence, no sense reveals."

Thus a message of far away friends
Spite of space conditions, one feels.
Surprised, she paused a little space,
Nor thought of her raven hair,
Fresh roses bloomed on her face
Unharmd by the wintry air.
Then suddenly to'ard the South she turned
The blinds removed a mite—
Opened the rose-buds of her mouth
And thus her song took flight.

"My waiting is over—is over—
My heart hunger soon will be past
For my lover is coming, is coming,
My lover is coming, at last.
The North light is smiting the winter,
Ice, snow, feel earth's heart beat at last.
Strong currents of love in me center
My lover is coming at last.
I hear the wild wolf in the distance
His reindeer like hope travels fast,
All earth stirs with life's new existence
My lover is coming at last.
Joy, joy, my heart cannot measure
No more kisses of love to the blast
My senses all reel with sweet pleasure
Returned is my lover at last."

The two songs met upon the icy waste
Fused and were one like spirits in embrace
Scarce from her casement had the last note died
Ere in his arms the lover held his bride.

SINGING BROOK

(Idle-Wild—Indiana)

Go abroad—Where should we roam?
Why search every foreign nook,
When we have right here at home
Nature's favored, singing brook.
Between low hills it goes alone,
Tuneful down its path of stone;
While thrush on bush and lark on high
Rapture proclaim to field and sky.

Graceful willows guard thy banks;
Modest wild flowers, rank on rank,
Lift their dew-cups to the sun,
Fragrance dowering music's run.
While the red bird brings his song
To the open, where the throng,
Robins, wrens, song sparrows, meet
To make spring's madrigals complete.

Brimming like nature, here and there,
Children catch gladness from the air;
While age, recalling springtimes gone,
Scans time's wide sky for signs of dawn.
Run, brook, sing on! Pour all your trills,
Stirring each heart till joy spills
Thy nature songs in every ear,
Winning our lives from doubt and fear.

TRANSFIGURATION

Daylight was dying beyond the dark clouds
That skirted the western horizon,
Which the sun made bright with glorious light

Beyond aught, I had ever set eyes on.
Entranced and amazed, I saw as I gazed,
Rough torn clouds transformed into splendor;
I said in my heart, "The Good Lord be praised,
For this lesson of which He is mentor."
When our day ends on earth and we enter the night
May the sin-clouds and chill mists that blind us,
Like the sunset to night with a glorified light
Transform things in beauty behind us.

THE JOURNEY

O'er stretches sweet of childhood days,
Across the years of dream and haze,
Through youth's wild ways I traveled on
Toward reason and ambition's dawn.

Through schools of learning on I went,
On wisdom, fame and wealth intent,
Toward love and ease and sweet content
I journeyed on,
Dreaming of heavenly blessings lent,
When toil is done.

I met the world, experience came;
Mingled were voice of praise and blame
Success and failure just the same,
Rose gardens, battle fields of flame
Life journeys on, sound foot or lame.

Abraham went forth of old, we're told,
Not knowing where he went,
We travel too, like him of old,
Dim conscious that we are sent.

We journey on, though lights go out,
Where paths are plain, or lost the route,
With friends and foes, from vale to height,

We journey toward the infinite,
Across the fleeting years we go,
God made the world and willed it so.

Voices unknown, unheard, control
The subtle powers of heart and soul;
Impelling forces lead us on,
Forever toward some future dawn.

The eye beholds no guiding star,
Hope's continent lies ever far;
Yet full of faith, I journey on
Across earth's night, to meet the dawn.

Life's cup of zest is never dry,
Though time, desire, and senses fail,
The stream that fills it heads on high.
And toward that fount this life's the trail.

So ever I look to the hills of hope,
Whence the sunset glories burn,
I shall there or beyond, find wider scope,
I shall enter and never return.

BE OF GOOD CHEER

Why do we sob in flats,
And wail in minor keys?
Men with immortal hopes,
Alone waste time on these,
Sad comfort find in these.

Repentance is unknown
In Nature's wide domain,
Man weeps, and man alone
Courts sorrow, grief and pain;
To sorrow turns for gain.

Nature for joy was made,
Man fears even hope will fade.
God's child, earth's highest made.
Alone is doubt's low slave.

Each dawn the air is full of song,
All earth awakes to happy life,
The west is full of glory
When night gives rest from strife.
There is no end to life.

REMEMBERED

Oft while dreary night is passing
Thru the realms of silent space;
I am musing, guarding, keeping,
Memory watch for some sweet face.

And at times from starlit spaces,
Dreamlike floating from above;
Greeting, beckoning, smiling faces,
Strengthen, cheer me with their love.

Friendship's faces, love's dear faces,
Shrined within the Soul's embraces.
Full of youth's immortal graces,
Lost to earth's accustomed places.

Joy, I know they still remember
Trysts of earth and hearth stone ember;
Wait our coming, lost loved faces
From below, to soul embraces.

What seems broken, lost and buried
In life's night on earth;
Lives redeemed, somewhere is cherished,
All life's lovely things of worth.

DUAL LIVING

We scatter frowns, we scatter smiles,
Play hawk as well as dove;
We curse, we praise, in cruel heedless ways
We spoil both hate and love.

The deeds we do, the words we say,
Life's actions one and all,
As on we go from day to day,
Are mostly dwarfed and small.

And yet at times the dullest eye
In purest light swims round;
And often mid life's commonplace,
Sweet blooms of thought are found.

The plainest face boasts sweetest charms
If lighted from within;
The hardest heart oft fruits in love
Between great acts of sin.

We call this good, we call that bad,
Oft knowing both misnamed.
Teach hearts a wider charity,
Too frequently we are blamed.

For right or wrong the standard waves;
On which side do you train?
Let's oftener take account of stock,
And know our loss and gain.

Cease to do evil as you can—
Life's highest end's not pelf,
Mankind will never be reformed
'Till each reforms himself.

WHAT WILL THE ANSWER BE?

In the shadows of the evening,
When life shall near its end,
Will your daily acts of living
Give you sorrow then, my friend?

Will our earth joys rise, accuse us,
With a fevered heart's unrest,
Or with patient love excusing,
Make us think we did our best?

Will friends regret they knew us
When the past is turned to clay,
That we shared our simple joys,
Making glad life's passing day?

Will some be grieved and sorry
Who ranked you as a friend,
When the now becomes a memory,
Will they blame you or defend?

Every word shall rise in judgment,
Every act once done shall stand,
Will they change from sweet to bitter
As we near that other land?

There intent will be the question
That decides the right or wrong,
Was the motive low or lofty,
Was the purpose weak or strong?

Was the reason choked with error,
Was the conscience sent away,
Or was life allowed its living
In the proper human way?

Our influence is immortal!
 Serious each word and deed;
And our souls are big, or little;
 According to our creed.

We are human, yet immortal,
 While the soul is clothed in clay.
We are God's and yet, we are mortal,
 Living cheaply every day.

We can frame no answer squarely
 To life's questions, as they come,
Sense and courage oft are lacking
 And we dodge our duties some.

But I pray you tell me truly,
 That is, truly as you can,
Will you blame me or defend me,
 When in judgment we shall stand?

HEART TO HEART

My heart is tender and sweet
My eyes are moist with tears
I bear the solicitude of love
Sweet burden of questions and fears
You cannot come to me, I cannot go to you
For who can contravene life's law
That veils the soul from view?
Alone I feed on memories sweet
And delicate hopes the soul's own meat
That will keep me strong until we meet
As lovers may on the crowded street
To smile and pass, or stroll and talk,
In meadow ways or woodland walk;
When the heart may know and enjoy its own
In rifts of barriers round life thrown.
For one short hour is longer far
Lived soul to soul than life of star.

LIFE

*[Life is more than a chunk of intellect
Sent into the world to be entertained.]*

Out of the heavens as falls the snow
Souls come down to the children of earth.
Flakes of life from the bosom of God
Sent to quicken an earth cold clod;
With warmth of Deity all aglow,
The soul is planted in human birth.

Delicate plants in unkindly soil
Where winters are long and heavy the toil
How shall ye grow how shall ye grow
In a world of trouble and want and woe
Where air and earth and the waters beneath
Are hostile to life, are friendly to death?

Yet, ever the edict is come and grow,
And ever the edict is come and go!
The cry of an infant heard in the night
A wailing cry in a hapless fight
Life's span too narrow to reach the dawn
The light of life in the night withdrawn.

Yet, under the edict of Come and grow
And under the edict of Come and go
This life is entered for short or long
For toil and sorrow or service of song.
To eyes of all living the light is sweet
Tho shadows often, lie deep at our feet.

Battalions of evil united are joined,
While forces of good are a volunteer band.
Life's battle means death, cripples and wounds
Means heroes, a few for whom glory abounds.
Every creature a cripple, all flesh full of scars;

Life itself a caged bird ever beating its bars.

The conflict is bitter 'twixt evil and good,
Man must grow (if he grows) by might of his
blood.

In body and character, spirit and might
Ever breasting some storm ever facing the light;
Man must grow (if he grows) by might of his
blood,

Thru sunshine and storm like an oak of the wood.

Out topping his fellows in virtue or crime,
His head swathed in clouds or a nimbus divine;
Man must follow or lead and leaders are few,
Where dim is the light, the false often seems true.
In our conflict with error, darkness and doubt,
If we follow the true, the false we may rout.

A smile conquers more than stoutest of swords,
Deeds, silence, count more than weapons or words,
Though short, life is roomy and fairly supplied
With aches, pains and tears, love and joy beside,
With passions of evil, emotions of good,
Life's shore line is washed by tides in the blood.

The image each worships is found in the heart,
Be it silver or gold, be it science or art.
Be man cruel or selfish or lover of kind,
The God that is worshipped in each heart we find.
By choice life grows, growth depends upon food,
By choice man grows toward evil or good.

Under law life is spirit with matter combined,
Hence a limit to freedom in nature we find;
Law limits the burden and length of the road;
Love sweetens the service when part of the load.
Man may grow love and hope till servitude past

Then in pure light of freedom and wisdom may
bask.

Evil thoughts on heart and face leave a stain,
Pure thoughts, sweet the face, and happy the brain.
Life's a mission of duty an errand of trust,
A foot path o'er mountains thru valleys of dust.
Bread and water of life are everywhere found
On which man may feed, standing feet on the
ground.

Be life happy or sad depends on the man,
Depends on subserving or spoiling God's plan;
A plan that is plain as His law or the sun
Or hope in the hearts of His children, each one.
It includes the life now the life whence we come
And at last the sweet joy of again life at home.

BEAUTIFUL WOMEN

I have tested the light for fifty years
And my eyes are keen and bright
There is beauty in the face of a child
As well as the man of might,
But a rarer beauty
Nor less uncommon,
Is the peerless beauty
Of a sweet old woman.

A nimbus of patience frames the face
The life well ripened is full of grace
And the heart once narrow, grown warm and wide
Has room for all, like the old fireside.
To children and friends
And guests in common
There's no face like the face
Of a pure old woman.

On the train I've seen her look fresh and clean
When every one else looked fretful and mean.
A humble soldier of troubles and cares
Whose heart kept sweet thru bitter years.
Thru life's low stretches
So dusty and common,
None carries a face
Like a saintly old woman.

Deep eyes and wrinkles there may be too
A worn old face but the lights shine thru;
Sweet light from the stars of hope and faith
And a love for man like the Savior hath.
Before her beauty
Youth beauty is common
I bow at the feet
Of a grand old woman.

Old sweethearts with faces full of charms
In a world of trouble, wounds and harms
This world is better because of you
The beyond more real, its promises true.
There's a light in thy face
That is wholly uncommon,
I'm a child in the presence
Of God's old women.

WASTED OPPORTUNITIES

When the young earth was finished
And rolled at God's feet;
And measured by wisdom
All things were complete.
With their garden enclosed
And planted to hand—
With duties assigned
All lovingly planned.
It would seem, Eve and Adam

Without taint of blood,
Had openings in life
That were roomy and good.
But they wasted their chances,
And evil entailed
On the whole human race;
In Eden man failed.
From perfection once fallen
Soon sin grew so rank,
That the whole earth polluted
In God's nostrils stank.
Then the angels went searching
And would you believe?
But one family they found
On the earth fit to live.
Six score years brave Noah
Derision withstood
'Till the world's laugh
Was hushed in the
Earth's cleansing flood;
And then faith's old hero
At whom the world railed,—
O, fate to be wept o'er—
In the restored earth, he failed.

Pray next trace the promise
To patriarchs good,
That a rich land He would give
To the sons of their blood.
From the Egypt to Canaan
Of each human race
From the aim to be good
To the end in disgrace
By achievements in ruins
Life's history we trace.
Israel willed to do good,
But thru weakness entailed—
Tho God tarried with him,

In Canaan man failed.

In the Church partial failure!
He's a failure in state
Though fair in aught else
As a failure he's great.
Unsettled his science
Uncertain his praise
Obscure too, the meaning
In much that he says.
Tho a possible god,
Man is generally so thin,
That he ranks as a symbol
For failure and sin.

ARE YOU DOING YOUR BEST?

White are the ashes of many a thought
That has burned in the brain.
Foolish ambitions for which men have fought
Dismal their trails of pain.
Desolate victories genius hath won
Lacking a noble aim.
Gardens of hopes lie withered and dead
Loves neglected and slain,
Strewing the pathway of many a life,
Wreckage of heart and brain.
Low aims—O, doubts, ye have hurt the world
More than swords and spears.
The Atheist's laugh has bruised more hearts
Than the burdens of all the years.

Awaken, O Souls! Why live like moles
On the bitter roots below.
Up, up to the top, where flowers and fruits,
In rich abundance grow.

Wayside shrines I have seen a corpse on a cross,
Hanging stormbeaten, wasted and dread;

Arise—look beyond the image of loss
And the living Christ worship instead.
Empty grave, an angel, burial clothes,
God's Son is risen the whole world knows!

Fuller life is waiting for thee,
The battle is won over death and sin;
Accept Him, Salvation is free!
Love's triumph, o'er sorrow is tender and sweet;
Heirs of joy in heaven are we.

MY PALACE OF ART

Many and great are the halls of art
In cities old and new
Where mangled statues stand for art
And out of old canvas baked faces start
At the wide-eyed visitors' view.

There is never a heart
In those forms of stone
From within no light on the face;
On smoky canvas though ever so old,
Only color and form we trace—
At best but a painted face.

When chisel or brush has done its best
On landscape group or head
Tho the effort live—a work of art,
'Tis a corpse with the spirit fled
Some unit of nature dead
Shrouded in curves of beauty
Or smothered in painter's red.

But in memory's hall my statues all
Are the living forms of friends

The faces there never stonily stare
For soul is never lacking where,
We give and take as friends.
There memory dowers life.

The heart is the home of friends we love
Where faces keep warm and bright
There they are never averted
When troubles come,
In the face of a friend there is light.

A SURFEIT OF EVIL

The brain of the world is troubled,
The heart of the world is sick,
There is doubt, unrest and worry,
Great evils, grave rumors fly thick.

Thru press and currents electric,
Deeds of darkness stalk into the light;
Earth's cruelty bloodshed and passion;
All nations and parties in fight.

Even love once so sweet and delicious
Is despoiled of her worship and charms;
Faith, Hope, man's archangels of mercy
Seem to droop in the world's weary arms.

Life's hurry and worry and friction
Increase as the days that are flown;
Peace comfort are dreams of delection
With Hail! Farewell! and are gone.

Invention and civilization
Have so widened our knowledge of crime,
That our brains and hearts with the poison
Seem injured and tainted for time.

Why feast we on lust, crime and passion
When the beautiful, good and true
Wait above and around in profusion
To refresh our parched souls with their dew.

Virtue never improves on bad knowledge
Vice never reforms painted red.
Hearts that ache least and beat longest
Must on wisdom and patience be fed.

Providence is not a power that apports,
To each age and each life its ill.
Men rebel, choose plenty and bondage,
Then He leadeth them out as He will.

THE BETTER COUNTRY

November winds rave through the sky
Stripping nature and leaving her cold
The wild birds complainingly cry
As their southward journey they hold.
The kingliest trees on the hills
Have shaken their coronals down
The voice of the streams and the rills
Is sad and the meadows are brown.

Thru the kindest days of my youth
The fever of waiting hath swept
And life's summer alas for the truth
Over error and wrong I have wept.
And now with the winter so near
Like the wild birds complaining I cry
For a home in a sunnier sphere
With the River of Life flowing by.

CREATION'S MASTERPIECE

For this human flesh that binds
Us immortals to the earth
Lord we thank thee for thy kindness
Making souls of priceless worth.
For endowing man with reason
To all other flesh denied:
For setting them in families
Planning husband, planning wife.
Creation's crowning masterpiece
With breath of God for life.

Man born to rule—yet called to serve,
Thy path ahead is rife
With promises of happiness
To the faithful here in life.
Human flesh is honored truly
By its maker and its Lord:
'Bove flesh of beast or flesh of fish
'Bove flesh of soaring bird.
For tho he's tethered to the flesh
He's heir and—Child of God.
Yet sometimes here man lives so low
He seems an earthly clod.

HEART STORIES

The earth is full of glories
From sky, in woods and streams,
Men's hearts are full of stories,
Men's brains are full of dreams.

Though brain and heart may perish,
Earth's glories be forgot,
Mind-dreams and true heart stories,
Live on and perish not.

ORIGIN AND DESTINY

These questions arise universal,
Our whence, our whither and why,
Life's origin, fable, and mystery
Its duration a span of the sky,
Then, disorganized losing identity,
Whither goes life, when we die?

Science prates about Monads, and Molecules
Of cells, protoplasm and mud,
Declares evolution a great law of progress,
Controlling life currents of blood,
Preaches choice and natural selection,
Credit strength with Caliban-purpose
To achieve all ultimate good.

The procession is lengthy eternal,
Its head in the glory on high,
While the tail follows on woe bedraggled
Through palace and stable and sty.
Hoary time alone knows the struggle—
Heard each death groan evolve a new cry.

I pause, I ponder, I question,
I am—came some way I know.
Earth's myriads, endless succession,
In one cosmos of conflict and law.

While I pause and ponder and question,
The procession moves on toward some goal,
Not the hope of an earth born desire
But the home, spirit home of the soul.

Dower chance, with the grace of creation
Or to matter, adjudge the vast plan,
But for me, I accept the all Father,
Who breathed his own spirit in man.

TOUCH

There is no weakness in a fond caress
The soul doth leap to taste
 The ripened richness
Of clean sweet lips.

Fair cheeks turn white,
A tremor shakes the frame,
 How good from willing lips
A kiss to claim.

The eloquence of touch
Enchains the soul;
 What subtle charms
Doth every sense control;

Blest aid to sight,
To hearing and to speech,
 The soul thru thee
Its highest joy may reach.

TIME

Time, the destroyer, is ever at work,
Spoiling the sunshine, spoiling the dark,
Filling the day with wrinkles and cares,
Filling the night with shadows and fears,
Wrecking the ships on every sea,
Hurling to ruin the cities we see,
Cooling the sun, shrinking the stars
And wasting life with direst wars.
But death is only change in form,
The thing essential suffers no harm;
Life, beauty, in fresher forms appear,
Law clothes the earth anew each year.

Succession, ever from old to new,
Atom and planet and starry crew
Circle and roll in grand review,
With naught but the master's will to do.
Matter only is wrecked by time,
The spirit in love to God will climb
And enjoy the angel's happy clime,
Unharm'd by the eating tooth of time.

JOY IS IMMORTAL

All songs of woe are earthly songs
That perish with the flight of years
But joy pours her immortal songs
Like sunlight through this vale of tears.

Decay and death reign everywhere
In bud and blossom fruit and tree
Love, faith, hope, goodness 'scaping free
Assert our immortality.

All odes of death are muffled strains
That echo from earth's Cemetery
Where mother nature calls and keeps
Our cold dust when in death it sleeps.

But life and hope and love
On lark wings soars above
Where Joy immortal reigns
Completes all broken strains.

Sweet faces all restored
No death where love is Lord
The immortal ship on board
Bears joy complete unmarred.

EVOLUTION OR KISMET

With what is nature satisfied?
Summer says production.
Presto change—the seasons glide,
Winter says destruction.
Birth and death mark the extremes
Of the path she travels.
Whence the birth or why the death.
Are knots she ne'er unravels.
Back and forth the shuttle goes
Thru each changing season;
Nature is never satisfied,
It's plain she does not reason.
Prithee, what are nature's laws?
God's fiat, repetition,
The evolution of a plan,
The freedom of rotation.

LOVE CASTETH OUT FEAR

The sun each morning comes anew
To drive the night away,
But love once welcomed to the heart
Abideth night and day.

Both fear and hate are dispossessed
Yet there's no vacant room
When love first fills the human breast,
Then life bursts into bloom.

THINGS WE REALLY KNOW

How few are the things
That we really know
Compared with the many
We dimly perceive.
How seldom the light

Strong and clear, breaks thru
Our shadows and doubts
And shines where we live.

We sigh for the hill tops
All flooded with light
That lie in the distance
So grandly in view
Like the dawn of tomorrow
To reach them alas!
Some valley, some night
Must be surely passed thru.

In the valleys malaria is rank,
And fevers consume in each vale
Life perishes rank upon rank,
Ere the lift of the foothills we hail
The nights are noxious with dews
Death rests the mass ere the dawn;
Few indeed struggle on to the heights
Which the light rests in glory upon.

WE SEE DIMLY

Man's vision's dim he cannot see
The hand that shapes his destiny;
Something elective in the soul,
Some power elusive gains control
And shapes the life.

Logic our slave, prates, prophecys
Of downward slant or upward rise,
Asserts a bent, declares to know
The future way the man will go;
It may be so.

Man's life is short, pray who can see
The hand that shapes eternity?

Yet onward ever all things go,
The master spirit wills it so;
Controls the bent.

Aeons of years have come and gone,
The seasons unperturbed roll on,
Yet each age boasts above the past,
His generation beats the last,
And bides content.

EVER IN DEBT

Alone I fall, alone I cannot rise,
A God must lift me if I reach the skies.
From heaven man came down to earth,
To go to heaven lacks both strength and worth.
As babe I rested on my mother's knee,
As boy I courted wisdom, shouted free!
As man grew boastful, arrogant and proud,
School trained became both vain and loud,
Loss, sickness, out one cannot fence,
Experience only, dowers us with sense.

THE LIFE TRAIL

From the past to the present
Our life-trail extends; thence
To some future point, where it ends.
What beautiful stretches
Of plains and of hills
Of valleys and mountains
Each span of life fills.

Many moons give their light
Many nights full of stars
Shed their beams on this trail
Thru life's struggles and scars,

A generous light from the sun day by day
Makes surer, lighter each step on the way.
Low and sweet voices whisper—
The hopes of the years
To the heart when it is sad
To the brain's troubled fears.

Rare blossoms of friendship,
Warm hand clasps of love,
Are the traveler's birthright
While faith points above.
No pilgrim journeys the life trail alone.
A friend goes with each; of old it was penned,
"Lo, I am with you alway unto the end."

GATHERING TRUTH

The stars of the night are many
The light of the day is the sun.
The brains of the world are many
The mind of the world is one.

Each brain has its noons of fever
Its nights of fret and doubt
In gathering truth in limitless fields
Which the infinite mind maps out.

Incessant and sharp the struggle
To grasp the infinite thought
And seemingly ever beyond us
Is the truth for which we wrought.

Each brain's like an arid desert
Where mirages of truth arise
And reason and hope are pilgrims
To the wells of the All Wise.

Here single truths are oases

With refreshings for the soul,
But we pant for the land of promise
For truth, the infinite whole.

THE TEACHER OF NAZARETH

O, Thou for whom the whole creation yearned,
From Adam's fall
Till thou in Bethlehem wast born.
The streams of mercy, truth, righteousness
By primal purpose meant to water
All the fields of life
Had left their native channel beds,
Seemed dried or turned aside
Upon an ingrate world of bigotry,
Of lust, cruelty and selfishness,
Timely thy coming, thou didst find and feed
The feeble streams of Faith and Hope,
And put the stumbling feet of marching hosts
Upon the way of righteousness and truth,
And make thy followers victors over death.

THIS EVERY DAY WORLD

An endless procession of day and night
A mighty procession of wrong and right
A motley procession of black and white
Is this every day world.
Out into space who blazed this path?
Here, why is goodness mingled with wrath?
Pray make it plain whom wisdom hath
To a waiting world.

The schools of sense and sight, reply;
The good or ill is in the eye,
Things must be somehow—that is why,
In a tangible world.
God made it and pronounced it good

Though treason on it spawned his brood
Yet God maintains his fatherhood
Is faith's reply.

God's plans immense are clear as light,
Though here there is only part in sight;
Other horizons large in size
The purpose shows to better eyes.
O, mortal man move on, move on!
This night of life leads to the dawn
Where faith and hope and love regain
The heights where all things are made plain.

THE FIRST FROST, NATURE'S TRAGEDY

White and cold lay the moonlight
Over the earth all night
As the frost king rode
With his princes abroad
To enjoy the wealth of the year.

Bud and blossom he kissed
There was nothing he missed
But his breath was death
To forest and heath
As the nuts he untied with care.

He jeweled the earth with beauty rare,
Too frail to last in the sun's full glare.
Beauty-bubble of breath,
For in it was death
To the beautiful everywhere.

When out of the east the morning came,
There were bashful blushes of every beam
That kissed the brow of the early dawn,
Leaped to the earth; passed on; and on;
A procession of kisses rare.

On prisms of splendor the sunshsine fell,
O, the wealth of that moment none may tell;
A flash of glory, a swift gleam lost,
A year of labor that moment cost,
The earth swung black and bare.

How cruel it seemed as I walked around—
The children of summer lay on the ground;
They seemed, to say, "Deceived, robbed, slain,
We trusted his kingship all in vain,
He promised us beauty rare.

His words were kingly under the moon
We wantoned at night are lost ere noon;
He scattered his jewels as if in fun,
They blazed in the star-light every one
Like diamonds in beauty's hair.

With added charms we longed for day.
When morning came they fled away,
As the false always have done,
They were counterfeit every one
And their poison its work has done."

Beware of the tempter that comes by night
When stars swing low and moon is bright,
For the night is for rest
And the day is best
To test the truth now here.

THE GAME OF NATURE

I see effect,
I seek the cause,
Am led by hope,
Hemmed in by laws.

The mornings come out of the east
The days go out in the west
Long are the seasons of toil
Short are the times of rest.
Ever the seasons go round,
The dates of birth and death,
Earth-life comes out of the night
And goes out in the night of death.

So forever in dumb amaze
I look the world in the face
And ever of nature I ask
What is the game she plays?
And while I pause for reply,
A cyclone girdles the earth
Or in peace the nursing light
To a myriad motes gives birth.

I watch the forces that build
The rocks, the flowers, the trees,
Unbalanced swiftly destroy
The beauty and strength of these.
The flower fades from sight
Ere I number its delicate hues;
A star explodes its light
And a point in space I lose.

Mutations of good and of ill
Beat on the feeble, the bold;
The babe is born into blight,
Nature loves nothing that's old.
And ever I question the cause
Of the smile or the frown on her face
And ever the earth replies—
"Accursed, I'm a stranger from grace."

So above or beneath I must look
For a key, this riddle to ope;
Since nature, in all the round world
Feeds nothing immortal like hope.
In succession no comfort I find
Tho the type never suffers decay;
Has the creature no prospect in death?
Is wear out the toilers sole pay?

The rocks urge their records in vain
The sea adds a manifold store
Locked in fate, under law written plain,
Succession and death, nothing more.
The unrest of the here, and the now,
Is but changing of matter in form,
Beyond the freed spirit shall stand
Undimmed by mutation or harm.

Earth arrangements are vast, I insist
So I urge the whence, whither and why
Nature, science, art, cannot know,
They are bounded by sense, by the eye.
Ever Sphinx like she looks into space,
And her face too, by vandals is marred;
But to know why she smiles or frowns
Man's wisdom has never unbarred.

The savage and tender she feeds
Alike nurtures serpent and dove;
Her children are war, doubt, death;
Her visitors faith, hope and love.
From cradle to grave nature turns
Her complex pageant of facts,
Revealing enigmas extremes,
Ever hiding the spring of her acts.

Life is still neath its pillar of cloud;
Still by reason and sight we are led,

Yet beast roar and bird cry are heard
By Him from whose hand all are fed.
God's voice the distant sun hears
Is obeyed by wind, river and sea
Tho, thru nature I cannot see God
Yet nature thru God I shall see.

Neath my feet on her way turns the earth;
I am conscious there is law in her flight;
Tho perturbed and chancelike all seems,
Wisdom governs I know, beyond sight.
Let me visit the fountains and springs
That lie hid beyond nature in cause:
For study the earth as I will
She reveals but a conflict of laws.
There is much eye of flesh cannot see
That is near, and yet beyond sight,
Earth's kingdoms will not be explained
'Till with God we go forth in the light.

HIDDEN WISDOM

God hid a measure of Wisdom
In nature according to plan;
That it might honor its maker
And nurture his creature man.
He planned for rock and planet
Took thought for seed and root
Suited a voice to every mouth
Made paths to fit each foot.

Yet thru the springs I question
Whether bud and leaf is all
Only grasping the answer of purpose
When I garner the fruits of fall.
Then amazed I cease to question
Why zones are hot or cool
For above sits infinite wisdom

The earth is her foot stool.
God provides for all the living
In abundance, what is best,
His open hand presents life's food—
Never pitched in any nest.

LOVE

What is this that thrills me, fills me?
Brimming like immortal nectar,
 Hebe gives the blest,
Stirs me as new life the northlands
 At the South winds breath?
Swift thru heart and brain joy flashes,
 All my nature yields;
'Till aswoon I seem to anchor
In a sweet delicious languor
 In elysian fields.

This is love I know its usage,
Red-lipped kisses are its fruitage,
While I pluck them soft caresses
Spirit touches, rapturous presses,
Waking life, new joy expresses,
Rolls the eye in liquid seeing,
O, the souls delicious dreaming
When two hearts with love is teeming;
 Souls unmasked;
Down a heavenly light comes stealing
Depths of heart and soul revealing,
 All unasked.
Love is the soul's gigantic effort
To regain its lost completeness,
To evolve life's bitter sweetness
 Here and now.

When in love God takes the measure
For the crown He'll place hereafter
On the brow.

STORM LORE

When great winds meet upon the sea
And wild storms join in revelry
When dark clouds roll and rain falls free
And lightnings flash most terribly
And the thunder speaks of eternity,
Ah! then on a steamer's deck you'll see
Pale lips show deepest agony.
For craven fear owns never a chart
The bed of sickness is fear's own port
When reason is dumb and faint the heart.

But to those whose faith holds all in fee
Sublime are the seasons of storm at sea.
Then God sets his element wheels awhirl
In His groves of coral and beds of pearl
To fashion and polish the gems of the world.
To polish rare jewels without a mote
To glitter and glow on beauty's throat.
To sweeten the waters so dark and deep
To work His will, preserve and keep
The life of the sea by the current's sweep.

Land without water has little worth
So clouds must be sent to all the earth;
Hence the sea toils hard, is nature's plant
By wisdom planned to meet earth's want;
Storms do the work that calm days can't.
God strains Himself, as it seems to me,
When he marshals His elements on the sea.
In love? yes, love on the sea was born
When red drops fell from a god's pierced form,
Love, beauty was born on the sea.

When myth gods fought in passionate storm,
Then Aphrodite of graceful form
Was by crimson drops set free.
Look again! look wider! O, man and see
The path of the ransomed winds thru the sea.
At last purged with fire on it shall stand
The victors o'er evil with harp in hand,
God's choir to honor the judge who will stand
Right foot on the sea, left foot on the land.

LIVING BOOKS

Every life is a living book
With pages large or small
On every page God's eye will look
Blank, blurred or written full.
Like folds of earth our deeds
Our thoughts, acts, even praying,
To the Divine Judge life's story
Will ever be portraying.

The book of life the book of death
In Egypt's rock hewn halls,
Where ancient kings were laid to rest
Is graven on their walls.
There, we today may read, what they
In pomp of life have done;
And how men strove to show where they,
The mighty dead have gone.

Chisel and color on those tombs
Show forty centuries past,
How judges weighed the heart, the brain,
The soul's life to forecast.
They weighed, computed good and bad
As shown in books of stone;
The anxious judges' solemn looks
Show by their acts, what's known.

So we toil, strive, seek, pray
In The Lamb's Book of Life
To have recorded day by day
Some victory over strife.
The human struggle has been great
To sight life's final goal
And put at rest our anxious quest,
The last state of the soul.

PAST AND FUTURE

All that is past is but a dream I dreamed,
A dream of gardens full of sweetest bloom,
A dream of youth and hope enkindling suns
A dream of friendships, loves and pleasures past
High aims and hopes elusive to the grasp.
A dream of fame such as ambition craves
Memories of aches, of sobs, and silent graves.
The past's an ocean in the realm of time
Flesh is its shoreline, blood of life its clime.
Some day, sweet death shall cut
The knot of life and set us free,
The soul immortal is to life the fee.
Then hope shall to the future point anew
As fields of truth appear in clearer view.
All that we knew before of past or dead,
Shall in the future be uncovered.
Here man dies daily both in head and heart
At last makes room for those
In this world's drama, who shall take a part.
Sweet death shall some day cut the knot
That tethers us to flesh and earthly quest,
Life's fever over we shall cool and rest.
Hope, truth and love import a higher zest;
When we shall bathe beside the well of life
Done with the chase and all unfruiting strife.

LOVE'S CALL

The night-bird sings within the bower,
Come dearest, come, this is the hour
Love blossoms like the rose;
The sun has set the stars are bright
Soft, radiant glories fill the night
With joys too sweet to lose.

Surely to bless life's hours of shade,
Such nights the stars and moon were made,
All lovers love the moon,
The world in bloom, a midnight flower,
That blossoms an appointed hour,
When all things are in tune.

Speed, longing hearts, life's call attend,
Love's Eden found shall never end,
Creation bids us choose,
Tho hope of heaven our souls command,
No reason in this border land,
Why we earth's joys refuse.

LIFE AND KNOWLEDGE

Two trees within the garden, we are told,
Where Eve and Adam dwelt in days of old,
Grew temptingly and fruited well.
They of the Tree of Knowledge ate and fell,
But from the Tree of Life, most strange to tell,
Only the scent of hope with dreams immortal,
Upon their ravished senses fell.

Since then, the race of men with manifold
Conjecture of what might have been;
Had they too eaten of the other tree,
We had escaped death's shadows; now be free
To mingle life and knowledge with simplicity.

Since then, perplexed has been the race of men
About the estate they lost; the garden Eden;
About truth and life and immortality.
But O, what ravishment of dreams, faith, hope,
Have blessed our lost estate since then,
And filled our souls with sweeter fragrance even,
Blown o'er the earth by love's own breath
From out the gates of heaven.

THE ROAD TO VICTORY

(These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Rev. 7:14.)

History drips with the conflict of ages
Trade is cruel with grinding for gain
Schools, statesmen, the wisdom of sages
Agree not, confuse heart and brain.
Fad, passion, no sating appeases;
Earth's tears are more bitter than brine;
Yet the songs of believers grow sweeter,
Love, faith, shall be victors in time.

Lust of gain is stronger than life is,
Each soul has its conflicts with sin.
Men are mad with a madness that rages;
Developed since God said—Begin!
Men are cruel and yet, full of pity;
Sometimes yielding a fragrance divine.
There is nothing sweeter than love is,
Faith, Love shall be victors in time.

O, Savior of man, thou redeemer
Of men from the ruin of dreams;
Calling, come and with thee be partaker,
Where heaven's sweet light sheds its beams.
The promise is Thine, is no man's;

Of our victory Thy cross is the sign;
Thy voice is sweeter than woman's,
Faith, Love, shall be victors in time.

GALILEE

Dawn came, the sun had put to flight,
The pomp of stars that filled the night,
Our startled eyes looked on the sea,
The hills, the plains of Galilee.
A sacred stillness filled the air,
His vanished voice seemed everywhere.

There lay Bethesda, where the Lord,
The blindman's eyes to sight restored.
And in a desert place close by,
Five thousand fed from scant supply.

And there Capernaum on the rocks,
Nestled midst herds and feeding flocks.
There Jesus dwelt and mighty works did He,
Sweet doctrine taught, rebuked the wind,
And stilled the troubled waves of Galilee.

There silent, white, upon a rocky pyramid,
"A City set upon a hill cannot be hid."
There from the fishes mouth a coin to pay
Tribute to Caesar, met their need one day.

And here, at gray of dawn, night's labor o'er,
Came his sweet voice from fair Genesaret's shore,
"Children have ye any meat?" They knew the Lord
And plunging in some swam and
Others rowed to reach the land.
And there upon some smoking coals
Broiled fish, with honey comb beside,
To meet their wants; the Lord in love supplied.

There from Gergesa's Tombs, they come
The two, in whom, a legion devils dwelt at home,
Demoniacs, exceeding fierce were they,

So none in safety mightest pass that way.
Demons to obey the Lord, could not decline;
But hastened forth and entered in the swine;
Ran down the steep in hot satanic glee,
And drowned themselves in placid Galilee.

There near the shore, their Lord the men espied,
Calling—"Your net cast on the right side!"
And from yon rising slope and rocky steep
The faithful shepherd sought his wandering sheep,
And in yon vale, wet with the dews of dawn,
He praised the lilies above Solomon.

NAZARETH

Mary Virgin, blessed of God;
How oft thy feet these streets have trod.
The pleasing scenes thy hills unroll,
Abound in feasts for heart and soul.
Nature in kindest mood compels
Earth's simple charms to crowd thy dells,
Along whose slopes wild blossoms run
With painted cups to greet the sun;
Tempting the eyes, the hands, the feet
By object lessons, fresh and sweet.
Thy circling hills, tho not sublime,
Call lagging feet to upward climb
To the horizon's wider rim;
Whence, mind and soul ascend to Him
Who came to earth a babe in flesh,
Mothered of thee in Nazareth.
Simple of life; thy kith and kin,
To nature true—'most free from sin.
Fitting it was God's son should come,
As Son of Man to Nazareth's home:
Where kindly welcome, even yet,
All Pilgrims to this village get.

The eyes are pleased by day, by night,
'Neath sun and cloud and starry light,
That look on thee, from sheltered height
Where modest women, as of old,
From Mary's Fountain sweet and cold,
Bear jars of water on the head
Along thy streets with swinging tread;
Noting, all wants are simply met,
Sans pomp, or show in Nazareth yet.
The curse of wealth, rests not on thee;
Sweet, simple faith hath made thee free
From cankering care and sordid fee;
Thy crown is cordiality.

THE WORK OF A CENTURY

(Watching a century plant bloom)

A hundred years of storm and sun
Has built each thorny blade,
Yet none except the hundredth one,
This glorious bloom presaged.

A hundred years with constant toil
Thou hast drained the barren earth,
Breathing a hot, dry atmosphere,
Hast labored for this birth.

'Neath harvest moons and silent stars
You have plied a tireless loom,
Emptied your veins of light and shade,
To weave this lovely bloom.

A veteran indeed thou art
A hundred years all told,
A homely plant e'er since its birth
At last is crowned with gold.

Ugly and shunned as little worth
Thru all these changing years,
The generations came and went
Worn out by smiles and tears.

Unpromising thru added years
Your homely bulk enlarged,
'Till perfected the inward life
With beauty burst surcharged.

Patient, obedient under law,
God's purpose grand has been ;
Not traceable, or known to man,
'Till now this bloom is seen.

O, plants, how like to men ye are
In all the things you teach ;
Howe'r so high your blossoms are
Your roots the ground must reach.

I've seen the aged bald and white
Bowed 'neath a century's weight,
All scarred and bent to outward sight ;
With spirits grand and straight.

The generations came and went
Nor marked the inward growth ;
The outside rough and homely,
Concealed from sight the truth.

What wonders lie in nature hid
'Long paths we daily tread
Deserts of earth must deserts be
Till they have blossomed.

This plant of life holds much concealed
Its growth outlasts time's years.
Each blossoms in eternity—
When done with doubts and fears.

GEORGIAN BAY, CANADA

In the province of Ontario
Lies an island, jeweled bay;
Where the sun rolls up in splendor
And his evening colors stay,
Making twilight long and sacred
Like hours of love and prayer
Where communing sweet with nature
Life triumphs over care.

Here the soul tiptoes in wonder,
Grasping mighty forces past,
That sowed thirty thousand islands
In those watery fields broadcast.
What splendid pleasures wait for man
In all such haunts of ease
As Wabicon—the camp of flowers,
Sansouci's—as you please.

O, Island moods ye charm me,
Fragrant forests, sweet your call;
Bird-songs, flower-incense, color,
I hear, see, enjoy you all.
O, Nature, Mother Nature,
Igneous rocks beneath your feet.
Glacial plowing made them ready
For thy forest growths so sweet.

Thy bays, lakes, crystal currents,
Home of fish, invite to sport,
Man is welcome to the real
In life's simple primal port.
To the Wild! sweet, sweet, the calling,
From the cities' cares and strife,
Rich thy welcome is and honest,
Simple Nature ways of life.

WARS AND WOUNDS

You ask me why I never write
Of battles and of wars,
I have no verses for the dead
And living friends of Mars.
You cite the many who have sung
Of chiefs and men of arms,
But you omit from every list
Dead, maimed, and wasted forms.
I love not those who beautify
This scourge, the whole earth grieves,
That bids men walk without their legs,
And live with empty sleeves.
I would not any evil gild
Nor virtue find in wrong
All fangs of snakes and dragon's teeth
To evil things belong.
From pains and aches and cruelty
Sweet music ne'er was heard,
Red battle fields and burning homes
Show hate and wrath are stirred.
Discordant drum and shrieking fife,
Steel shotted gun and shell,
Proclaim not "Peace good will to man,"
But visitants from hell.
Just count the cost of wars and arms
Of ruined homes and wasted farms;
Tell o'er the tears, the idle looms,
Behold earth filled with whited tombs!
And when the feast of death is done
And those who live with banners come;
Look for your father, brother, son,
Who to your arms no more will run.
Then, if you can, bestow your praise
On great destroyers, give them bays!
Bloody ambition has no charms,
Tho dipped in gore be both her arms.

When we our benefactors praise
For deeds of goodness, in those days,
Martial glory will die out;
And doing good, men go about,
As did the Nazarene
Whom bruised hearts praise,
For helping life in all its needful ways.

MY FRIEND AND I

We walked together my friend and I
When the stars swung low in the sky above;
We talked together of fame, of love;
While the tide of life ran high.
We talked a little my friend and I
With backward glance at years ago,
Of joy and sorrow then, hastened on
To the present without a sigh.

A moment we paused my friend and I
Our hearts stood still in dumb amaze,
As we tried to read behind each face
The soul thru the open eye.
Then we faced the future my friend and I
The possible crowded with hopes and fears
To be reaped and garnered in smiles and tears,
As the years come wearily by.

We knew our hearts, my friend and I,
Were full of passion and flesh a weight
To the spirit panting for life's estate,
In the possible by and by.
We saw the wrecks—my friend and I,
That mark the failures and waste of life;
We heard the din and saw the strife
That passes no one by.

With restless feet my friend and I
Followed the reapers into the fields
Where life it's mingled harvest yields
Wealth, Love, Hate, Poverty.
The mark was high my friend and I,
Set on the brow of the coming day;
Questioning, doubting we lost our way,
And life became a sigh.

We remembered at last, my friend and I,
The days when promises lay about,
And life was sweet with never a doubt,
When nothing seemed to lie.
Memory came back to my friend and I;
Came like a dream from a vanishing past,
The taper of faith relighted at last,
And hope shone again in our sky.
We believed again, my friend and I,
In the childhood faith that redeems us all
Faith only redemption for those who fall—
Doubt nothing except a lie.

WHAT IS THAT IN THINE HAND?

Ask him who strives and wins the game
Ask him—is this life all?
What say the strong, the blind, the lame,
Is earth life's only call?
Our hearts O, friends, were made for love,
Male, female, they came here:
Visit each Eden, there meet God,
Joy, grief, world products are.

Comes Hope unfathered to the brain?
Is Faith mere drug to quiet pain?
Tho some run mad,—this world's no blot!
Evil atoned for mars it not.
Why piece out life in starved design?

Ye are of royal blood!
God's truer light burns grand in some!
This life was broadly planned.
Some waste, some mend earth's little day;
All drop into God's hand.

IDEALS

Ideals are beautiful children
Born in the brains of men,
And the envied of earth are tailors
Who in words apparel them.

We name them intuition,
Genius, reason, thought,
But their value depends like children's
On the home to which they are brought.

A PART OF US DIES WITH OUR FRIENDS

A part of us dies with our friends,
Our hopes like spent stars
Fade out and grow cold
And our expectations like frosted leaves
Drop into the earth and mould.

A part of us dies with our friends,
Death darkens the brightest day
Makes home and the world
Seem so lonely and wide
We would rather go than stay.

A part of us dies with our friends
Love, friendship, unfostered must die;
Tho sweet memory live,
Tho we question and grieve,
There's nothing comes back in reply.

A part of us dies with our friends,
The rapture of touch and glance
When the light of a face
In death goes out
We look on the faces left, in doubt,
And weep o'er a vanished chance.

A part of us dies with our friends
The part that responds to demand
Exchange of counsel and laugh,
One half of a pleasure can never live
Divorced from the other half.

A part of us dies with our friends
The part we give those we love
A part of the brain a part of the heart
Time's best promises end in part
When death our friends remove.

PARDON FOR MISTAKES

When the heart is crushed with sorrow
And the eyes are wet with tears
When we cannot face to-morrow
On account of crowding fears,

It is sweet to then remember
How the dear Christ loved his own
And bore the whole world's sorrow
In Gethsemane alone.

How he understood our troubles
And hearts so full of aches
And gave the blessed assurance
There is pardon for mistakes.

FLESH AND SPIRIT

The brain hath it's thoughts
The heart hath it's loves
Some live, some wither and fade;
But the soul hath a life
That forever goes on
In a pathway of light and shade.

At times we climb to the mountaintop,
Then in deepest valleys we mire,
Like nature the soul
Has its winters of cold
And again its summers of fire.

THOUGHT MESSAGES

I had some thoughts, I put them in words,
An operator told them out on clicking keys;
Swiftly a message sped over continents
And under seas.
I later learned they reached my friend
Just how it was I did not understand
Or question, enough for me to know,
Some one had planned.

In confidence I paid required cost,
No doubt arising that a word be lost,
For each was safe protected on its course,
By unseen force.
Even so, soul-messages in fervent prayer
On wings of faith speed to the Savior's ear
Though reason may not fully understand
What God has planned.

So when disquieted by joy or fear
My soul communion seeks, I speed

A message, word by word, in prayer
To His own ear.
Deep hunger for the infinite commands
What gracious Love and Mercy understands,
And so, I pray without a doubt or fear,
My Friend will hear!

LIFE IS GOOD

Life called me and I came,
From whence I know not.
I waked and found me here.
Loved echoes filled my ear like magic words,
By dead lips spoken in some long ago;
Life's mystery thrilled me so.

I seized the cup of life,
Filled with the wine of night,
Sparkling, laughing with the rosy light
Of adolescence, hope, ambition, love,
Vintage from veins of deity, poured and shed,
Life's hunger must be fed.

Tho much of life has failed—
Time dims the eye and dulls the ear—
Yet life is good, I'm glad that I am here.
No matter whence this spark of life was hurled,
I am guest I know of more than this one world;
Sweet voices whisper and I understand,
The soul shall some day reach its native land.

BLOSSOMS OF LIGHT

We sat in the stern of the boat,
And looking away to the right,

In the angle of each crinkled wave
We saw the rays of the sun
Burst into blossoms of light.
Flame-flowers dropped from the sun
Like spark showers fell on our sight
Flashed a moment above each wave,
Then sank to abysmal night
In a hungry and watery grave.

Tho half of the summer was past,
The bay seemed a garden that day
As we passed on our breeze rippled way.
This lesson we learned that will last,
From the light and waters at play.
In each season, each clime, each zone,
Rare blossoms unnoticed decay,
Broadcast God's splendors are sown,
His earth gardens bloom every day.

Men are dumb, too blind to behold
That the desert doth bloom as the rose;
That the time by prophets foretold,
Arrives as capacity grows.
All nature's a tremble with love,
The clouds pavilion His light,
Men are heirs to below and above,
Yet possess but a fragment of light.

A VISION

It was late in the month of December;
There was snow on the shrieking blast;
And keen were the throes of the dying year,
As the moments hurried past.
My brain was hot and restless
With the swelling thoughts of youth;
And my soul was panting fiercely
To drain the wells of truth.

The vastness stretched around me;
The uncertain the unknown,
As into the night I fared me,
All silent and alone.

Thru torn clouds, cold white moonlight
Made of shadows a goblin play;
While stars at the earth winked ghostlike;
And the forest with fear did sway.

The earth to me was pathless,
There appeared for me no road,
My whence and whither distressed me,
'Till I swooned beneath the load.
Then I prayed for one to help me,
Or at least something to guide,
'Till it seemed the earth grew peaceful,
'Neath the swelling summer tide.

Then I awoke (I thought) and above me
In the air I saw a bird;
I rubbed my eyes and looked, and looked,
For I feared my sight was blurred.
But no, in the sky above me,
With it's right wing cleft in twain,
I saw it plainly with pinions spread,
It beckoned me on again.

Then I rose, or seemed to, and followed
That bird in its onward flight,
And in its shadow I swiftly went,
Upborn by a wondrous might.

At first my path seemed dreary,
Uneven and grievous my load;
But by and by it easier grew,
For that shadow became my road.
It seemed toward the east we journeyed;
How swiftly thru space we roved;
Yet the way was long and a curious throng

Looked up with wonder moved;
Till at last o'er an ancient city,
My bird with noble mien,
Rested from flight, in mid air height;
Then nevermore was seen.

My clothes seemed old, my hair long grown,
No more swept boyish shoulders;
For half my life seemed backward flown,
As those midnight streets I walked alone—
Thrilled with their ancient splendor.
I questioned the meaning, I said what next?
Walked onward, stood still by turns,
'Till one approached me whose face was kind,
Addressed me and said "I am Burns—
I am Warder of all the gifts of song;
The language true joy and sorrow learns;
The gift earth's people have prized so long."

"I have heard your passionate cry," (he said)
"Your prayer for expression and light;
Come, I will show you the road of life,
Whose beginning is lost in night.
Free will and fate mark ever the way,
That leads from darkness to wondrous day,
Man with his beginning has nothing to do,
Life is mind, is spirit; flesh has life too;
And man to each nature he has should be true.
In flesh it's the way of the earth and the mould;
Where life is but the flashes of heat and of cold
That sobs thru earth's valleys,

Or laughs among her hills;
And emotion or passion alone reveals,
As thermometers tell the state of the air,
In winter or summer, foul weather or fair.
When heart with its brood of emotions is full,

And reason would rule them as children at
school;
She fails as the teacher for reasons in kind;
In the flesh, mind and spirit are partially
blind.
There are scales on the eyes and scales on the mind;
Till these fall away be true to your sight,
And the dawn of each morning
Shall narrow each night."

"Life is action, endeavor, a struggle for gain;
Faith, hope are twin stars that burn in the brain;
Disappointments will come and ambitions depart;
You're immortal while love is the sun in your
heart."

He ceased, motioned onward and swiftly we
went;

While an arm to sustain me he graciously
lent.

We passed o'er the earth like a harmony, timed
By the beat, beat, en masse, of the hearts of
mankind.

Till at last at the foot of Parnassus, we found
That fountain where mortals with Godhood were
crowned.

He stooped with his cup reached over the brink
Then arose like a spirit and gave me to drink.

I eagerly seized it but scarce drank the whole,
Ere a thirst, unquenchable, raged in my soul;
In my hand was the cup but empty alone,
The fountain had vanished, companion had flown.
I trembled in wonder at what I had seen,
But failed to persuade me 'twas only a dream;
For afar as I float on the current of time
Earth tongues tell of things in flesh felt or seen,
When like John on Patmos in the spirit we've
been

When death gives the soul its mouth piece of
thought
Triune man shall then know and be known as he
ought.

POSSIBILITIES

By striving man may
Open glorified portals,
May enter and there
Rest safe with immortals.
Wisdom knows the true path,
Honor blazed it of old,
Hope, love speeds each Pilgrim
Along it, we are told.

Greatheart keeps the inns
At which one may rest;
Goodwill spreads the feast
Where true-worth is guest.
O Soul, murmur not
Tho earth paths be hard,
At the end waits the welcome,
Thine the Joys of the Lord.

CONSTANTINOPLE

I stood upon Galata Tower.
'Twas spring; the sun had warmed
To restlessness life's pulsing blood,
And wove a haze of languor
Over drowsing city, plain and wood,
Half rousing sleep to action.
In that silent land of prayer
What scenes of love and romance
Lay before me, Bosphorus, Golden Horn,
And old Stambul, where

Merchants seemed demanding
Business should desist
And give more time to rest,
More time to the delights of Love,
Ablutions, social rites and prayer.

Slow caravans with noiseless feet
Were bringing musk, ointment,
Richest jewels, finest cloth
To glad the heart of her who hides
Her face from eager eyes of men,
Yet is the houri of home and heart.
Before me lay the city's minareted mosques;
Her clustered homes of mystery and love;
The necromancy of her orient lore,
All stirred, as by the vanishing of dreams.
I felt the waves of change preceding action,
The voices of wisdom, freedom, deep unrest,
Calling an empire into modern life;
I saw the hosts of Progress seek the van,
I heard the plaudits of the rushing world
Cheering each sturdy effort of reform
So great the power of righteousness, when
Nations praise the noble art of doing good.

THE PHARISEE

A Pen Picture.

Honored of old in Israel
Stern Student of the law
Reducing with learned nicety
By weight, measure and rule
The duty, legal duty of a man
To simple axiomatic certainty
Under the code of Sinai.

Loving the pomp of worship,
The judicial display of loyalty,
Zealous of forms and tithes:
Omitting kindness and mercy
(The imponderable qualities left out).
Too good for any grace of soul
Or tender bloom of heart.

Spurning tolerance and mercy,
By imposed, rigid righteousness,
Thou didst earn the curse
Of frigid bigotry and creed;
Thy prayers, made to be heard of men,
Perished at the crossing of the streets;
Thine alms were all rejected,
The bugle's only note is notoriety.

Life is more than a tinsel show
Of deep borders and phylacteries wide;
All that you sought as good and great
Failed, left but contempt, reproach,—
The heritage of littleness that never dies.
In all the splendid heavens of thy day
Thou didst see no star of grace,
Thine but belief in immortality.
Sorely offended by Christ's words and works—
You won the persecution of the world.

WATER LILIES

(Tippecanoe Lake, Indiana)

By the Lake's lovely shores wherever I go
In gardens God planted, the wild lilies grow.
They grow golden hearted arrayed in pure white,
Owing nothing to man or his complaisant might.
Of Nature's own planting, they need not man's care,
Father's love for his children in bloom everywhere.

Their green leafy pads on the water they spread,
And fill with cool shadows each deep, oozy bed,
Lives hid in the shallows, from dark soil and grime
Lifting blossoms of praise, to their maker and mine.
Pure vestals are ye, at the shrine of the lakes
Untrammelled in service unfearing mistakes.

The author of Nature with loving intent,
Made to suit every creature its environment,
His gardens of blossoms fleck water and land,
Green fields, cool forests invite on each hand.
So I fly from the city, its strife and its heat,
And rest me when weary at nature's green feet.

I stroll thru green fields, over woodlands I trail,
Communing with insects, I answer the quail.
When weary, to rest, lie down on the grass,
And study God's pictures of clouds as they pass,
There is room for me here, each creature my brother,
There is room for each mood where Nature is mother.

WAYSIDE LESSONS

Along a country road I drove
With friends one summer day
Thin woods, green canopied above
Shut out the sun's hot ray.

The old rail fence on either side
Was moss grown in decline;
Decay seemed wed to life and pride
And crowned with eglantine.

In half cleared places log and stump
Were covered with wild bloom,

Flowers of earth, and sun and damp
Whose breath was sweet perfume.

Wayside surprises everywhere
Of wealth of summer told,
Nature was happy, not a care
Her wide realm seemed to hold.

The birds sang only songs of love,
In fields, stock fed at rest.
God's benediction from above
Dropped on the earth and blest.

Insect, bird and beast and plant,
Were happy all about;
Man seemed the only creature met,
Burdened with care and doubt.

JUNE VOICES

The June winds sing to me of love,
And voices whisper from the spheres
Life currents meet below, above,
And cancel all earth's past arrears.

The waves of life that gladden earth
Have clothed in verdure plains and hills,
Blossom and song and joy and mirth
Hope's vintage for the soul distils.

Life hath supremacy to-day,
O'er death, decay and broken wings.
The universal soul hath sway,
I feel its stir, hear whisperings.

Rare mental feast of happy thoughts!
I entertain delightful guests,
A fuller life drops down to greet

All life below with large bequests.

How luminous the moments are
When all our best is free from cloud,
From our dead selves we then arise
And leave behind the tomb and shroud.

THE GOODBY SMILE

A glow comes back when day is done,
A smile, goodnight, from the setting sun,
To-morrow's promise to all the earth
Daily repeated thro life, from birth;
Just a goodbye wave of a parting friend
In pure heart color, thine to the end.

A STUDY IN NATURE

I love to muse on nature, field and flood
To climb her mountains and behold her stars.
From all her generous seasons I receive my food,
In all her moods and mine, I'm welcome at her altars.

Each day the current of her heart she pours in mine,
In nature we are one, she is mine, I am hers,
Tho not in all, I'm conscious on the whole
Of something more, tho she may have a soul.
She's but the symbol of a Maker's thought,
Perchance discarded from the eternal mind
And under banishment—the slave of law;
Yet in the keeping of the omnific will.
Her every action vibrates to all law,
Hath no diversity within itself
Beyond the limit of potential cause.

I am more than matter in I hope for good,
Of her, yet hold the living breath of God.

I live above her in immortal thought,
Yet dimly see and know the task she's wrought.
Nature weds death—my life is sick of blood.
No debt forgives she, and no grave she fears.
Man does; he hopes for quietness and peace;
Such life begins where life of matter ends;
Immortal life and nature can't be friends,
She serves alike her victors and her slaves;
Pardons naught living,—though all, pardon craves,
Conscious and greater at the close of day,
When life is done, no man dared ever say,
I kept unbroken nature's laws of life.
The only written chart of God to man,
The highest laws of being all men break,
Then sigh for honest nature and her strife.

A WAYSIDE FLOWER

I stood by a wayside flower
Whose fragrance filled the air
Surprised at the fostering power
Amazed at the infinite care
That the feeblest things in nature
Receive in their brief lives here.
I said as I watched it growing,
"You are thirsty, that is plain!"
Clouds swiftly covered the heavens
And watered it with rain.
For man it had fragrance and color
For butterflies honey and dew,
A defenseless, needy flower,
Most artless, simple and true.
'Twas so delicate that I marveled
Whence its suitable food was brought,
Then discovered that, Laws of Chemistry
Nourished each fiber and root,
So frail I feared for its safety
To guard it I felt I ought,

But infinite wisdom forstalled me;
It was safe not needing my thought.
Man is slow, oft fails where creation
In matchless perfection has wrought,
God loves it, clothes it with beauty;
He has jeweled creation with thought.
The world seemed laid under tribute
To furnish it comfort and food,
Nature nursed it, fostered it's beauty,
Showers of grace supplement nature's duty,
Sent like mother love for others good.
The winds were marshalled to fan it,
The stars lit their lamps in the sky
To comfort and cheer it in darkness,
Gifts poured in from beneath and on high.
Earth and planets forever pay tribute
To each simple sweet form, of God's thought.
Man is helpless and fails where creation
In matchless perfection has wrought.
God loves it, and clothes it with beauty,
All nature is gemmed with His thought.

TREASURES OF THE NIGHT

The toil and thirst of life
Had parched my heart
In restless troubled mood
I prayed O, day depart!

Night came, and heaven's pomp was spread
In starry splendor overhead.
I walked abroad, looked up and saw
God's wealth of planets, love and law.

Countless in the skies above me,
Suns and stars and planets whirled,

All the cares of day seemed banished
From this richer midnight world.

Labor needs the clearer sunlight,
Nature loves the tropic day,
Follow Him when falls the twilight,
'Neath the stars go forth and pray!

UNREST

Our minds how they worry and fret,
How they tug at life's burdens of doubt;
They delve in the earth for relief
Then mount to the stars to look out.

So strange and unreal at times
This current called life to us seems,
That the seen and wished for alike
Are shadows afloat in the streams.

We love, with hearts that wear out,
Earth's creatures that suffer decay;
We house, what mortals call truth,
In brains that wear out day by day.

We determine this good and that ill;
Both condemned and approved is our taste.
What we covet and prize for its worth
Other men other times treat as waste.

With our eyes all defective of sight
Can the truth but as faulty appear?
Can our ears, not in concord with sound,
Tell the heart-beat of health, when they hear?

We may stand on the headlands of faith
Seeing waves from beyond kiss the shore
Tho our souls are transported in bliss,

Our flesh shrinks in dread at the roar.

For, redeemed may indeed be the soul
Ere the body, thru death reaches life;
Till both are redeemed and made whole
Must spirit and flesh be at strife.

Like the ocean that wearies its shores
Chafes the soul in the body, its prison;
Unrest must prevail till He comes
Till the time of the full restoration.

ROUTINE

Spring time comes and brings us promise,
Tender leaf and bud.
Summer scatters lovely blossoms,
In each field and wood;
Autumn comes with bending harvests,
Ripened fruit and pod,
Look, note nature's purpose, progress
As you walk abroad.

Then come frosts and storms of winter
Stripping nature bare.
Housed with death are bud and blossom,
All looks dead and sear.
But the coming sun will loosen
Winter's icy chain;
Death to man is only winter,
Springtime comes again.

DUTY AND EASE

Thick and cool lay the shadows
Under the great green trees;
Where swaying bough and waving grass
Invited to summer ease;

Yet, I walked on worn and dusty
Along the hot high-way,
For such I conceived my duty,
One scorching summer day.
And yet I reasoned and questioned,
For my duty tho plain was hard.
Why choose we toil in the sunshine,
Why rest 'neath the trees discard?
Do we choose or only seem to,
If we do, why choose we the hard?

On, on, yet I reasoned and questioned
Till my brain seemed hot as the sun,
My surroundings in whispers answered;
"There is pleasure in duty done."
Duty and pleasure went arm in arm
When the earth was young and sweet;
Instead of the hot hard roads of now,
There were grassy ways for the feet.
Yes, back in the dim, dim ages,
The world by sin was jarred;
And the universe a harmony then,
Is now but a sad discord.
No longer they travel arm in arm,
Over grassy hills and leas,
It is plain to duty while on the road,
That pleasure camps under the trees.
Yet life is for drill, for practice,
Use of head, of hands and feet!
If duty drums and wisdom fifes,
We may rout most foes we meet.

FENCED IN

Earth's roads are crooked and narrow
Mere ribbons 'twixt fence row and hedge;
Lying cool in the woodlands and valleys,
Winding hot over hill top and ledge.

Men's lives like the roads they travel
Are narrow and crooked, fenced in
By prejudice, custom and fashion,
By the mandates of virtue and sin.

We work on our lives as on highways
Spanning chasm, morass and stream;
By reason and faith bridging over
Life deeps, where naught solid is seen.

We grade and fill thru farm lands
Thru village and city we pave;
We get on quite well in fair weather
Thru storm and foul weather we slave.

We are taught from our youth that virtue
Must ever 'gainst nature's laws fight;
Eternal, unceasing and bitter;
With no furlough, no peace or respite.

So we fight this world as an evil,
Make our bodies and spirits dread foes,
Esteeming those worthiest, greatest,
Who number most woundings and woes.

The beliefs and opinions of sages,
The dogmas the schoolmen display,
With inherited weakness and bias,
Like fences determine our way.

So little and narrow and crooked
Man's life on this planet has been,
That the toil and the culture of ages
Still hopelessly leaves him fenced in.

THE RIVER OF THOUGHT

I lay by the open casement
When the tasks of the day were wrought,
And my brain was heavy with fragrance,
Borne in from the fields of thought.

Then I knew the world's great thinkers
As roses and lilies are known;
And I knew the neglected and humble,
That grow in the wastes alone.

The mass of the thoughts of thinkers
And their struggle since time began,
Seemed an endless, unfruiting endeavor
To grasp the infinite plan.

The labors of earth seemed fruitless,
Mere struggle for crust and bone;
Only thoughts of the soul and its maker
Go upward toward the throne.

Life's fever and fret and worry,
Earth's revel in cruelty, crime,
I saw thru the nimbus of wisdom
Were bounded by judgment and time.

The flowing of wisdom's great river
Was watering infinite space;
The wise were in touch with the current,
I knew by the light on each face.

Thought streams were swelling that river
I felt its swift rush in my brain,
God's thoughts, and those of his children
Sweeping on to eternity's main.

Great thoughts of the thinkers about me
Impinged on the brain and the soul;
For God and his humblest children
Are parts of one infinite whole.

My brain like the brain of Old Prophets,
Drank the soul flowing vigor in space;
And light above law, above matter,
Streamed in from the kingdom of grace.

The planets all sweeping in circles,
And truth, not in segments, but whole;
I saw with the swarm of the nations
Moving on toward the reign of the soul.

O, slaves of the earth haste your waking;
Superstition and doubt drive away,
With timbrel and harp swell the anthem,
We are nearing the coming of day.

O, freemen with spirits immortal,
Already the dawning appears,
Shout victory over the mortal;
Shout triumph over all fears

DISCONTENT

No man has reached his utmost growth
Who still is discontent,
The soul's immortal while its wings
On loftier flights are bent,
While higher ways and wider worlds
The sun of hope reveals,
New energies will be supplied
From fountains unrevealed.

PARADOX—GOOD AND EVIL

The world is full of evil and of death
Is full of poison and unwholesome food,
And yet is full of blessings and of good;
Yields nursing sunshine, airs of sweetest breath.

This world is full of evil and of death.
I question how this paradox can be,
For how can things diverse as bad and good,
Abound and fill immensity?
And which excels, does bad or good?
Why is there so much bad and so much good?
I called on reason with this, ugly why?
And soon from all the fields of life
The mind was busy gathering, sorting facts,
And tracing paths from cradle to the grave.
Assorting, weighing the incongruous store
Of bitter and sweet, of blight and bloom,
Of love and hate, of triumph and defeat;
Of good and evil, of blessing and of curse,
Of tears and smiles, of life and death;
Until I cried, accumulate no more!
And reason answered "I am out of breath."
And then, I called upon my soul my faith,
The just, the good, of all the ages past.
Why this propinquity of good and bad?
This law of mind that wars against the flesh?
For flesh is also under law,
So that the good I would I do not.

Then all the world made answer,
Whoso is free, must have the right to choose:
And whoso chooses also he rejects.
Two acts, to do both wisely,
Man must know shadow from substance
Must walk in paths where journey evil and good
Must know the bitterness of tear soaked food.
Experience, mentor in the school of life

Must teach him, not as fool
To fall a prey to evil things,
But how to prove the good,
And how to hold it fast
And so accumulating wheat
From all the harvests of the past
We may die wise and wealthy,
Victors over death at last.

AMBITION

It silently beckons us on
To heights we have never attained
Yet belittles the present while on
Great tasks our eyes are strained.

Great tides of blood
Were swelling in my veins
Poured by the dawn of manhood
When high ambition reigns.

The sweet, delicious pain
Of hopes that burn in every brain
Was flooding all my heights;
I felt the stir of greatness
Thrilling my startled soul;
The conscious flow of strength—
Calling, choose, act, control!
Waking to energy my laggard mind.

My heart beat wildly for the unattained.
So each youth pants and dreams—
Some great achievement in the years to be
I fain would have accredited to me.
So each one vigils toils and struggles on
From thought to thought from act to act
From height to height toward truth and fact;

Thru fields of hope still onward grope,
Unheeding what around us lies
Escaping sight, neath cloud and light,
Things common, plain to better eyes,
Above, below, on left and right.
O, souls push stoutly on
'Till the last height's attained
Life's Holy Grail once gained
Defeats will all be gone.

LOST THOUGHTS

What beautiful thoughts we often have
Such as genius in bloom affords.
Forgetting them we sigh, too bad!
I failed to put them in words.
They come a moment, delightful guests;
Then, silently take their leave.
Slighted, they seldom come again;
How often their loss we grieve.
Regret alone, this refrain affords;
"I lost them—failed to put them in words."
So often our minds are vacant, dull,
Cause, we are prodigal of the best;
Our own thoughts lost, after others we rush,
In an eager thoughtless quest.

We ask, we listen, we think, and read,
Until ears grow weary, eyes grow hot.
Till of other men's stuff we know a lot
Of hear-say, and they-say, and rot.
We ask, we listen, we garner and read
What others have thought and wrote;
But raise small crop of heart or head
Tho for larger yields they are fit.
So mostly our talk is borrowed stuff,
Bizarre and common, little our own;
Tho we had good enough ideals,
Wasted in fields home grown.

Yet we crop and crop and toil and toil
In rented fields of mind and heart,
Ever letting our own domain run waste—
And at death leave little worthy of praise.

A DAY IN THEBES

Grand in her ruins by the fruitful Nile
Lies Thebes—deserted, silent, eloquent.
Her hundred gates are gone
Her massive arches broken,
Palaces and temples tenantless;
And yet, her stately grandeur
Still lives on.

Her mighty walls bear record
Of her glorious past, chiseled
In words rich with the story
Of ambitious life.

Her eighteen thousand streets
Deep worn by restless feet
Of more than thirty centuries ago
Are trodden now by curious throngs
Who come eagerly demanding from her
Broken walls and mummied dead
Their tales of joy and woe.

And wisdom out of withered brains
Seemed borne to me from those
Who fill her tombs and left
Their record chiseled on her fanes,

Saying: "We served our day!
Great are the tasks of time,
Greater the chances in eternity!
Osiris called, we went away—
A greater leader came to earth—

Live, man, great is thy day!"

O, Egypt rich in treasures of the past
Beautiful in art, in legend, love,
River and lotus bloom, I turn to thee,
What John from Patmos saw,
Alone surpasses thee.

THE MONUMENT GROUPS

(Indianapolis, Indiana)

Massive, ill shapen blocks of stone
Were all the people saw,
Who watched the workmen, day by day
Place them ill balanced, carelessly,
Stained, seamed, with many a flaw.
As each unhewn block swung into place
East and west, on the monument's base,
The mass saw nothing but great rough stones,
Nor sensed the semblance of flesh and bones,
Rough rocks are so commonplace.

But one, tho his gaze seemed far away,
Saw forms of beauty that sought the day;
Saw statues and symbols unwrought;
Saw a nation's progress, victories, thought,
And the price at which great things are bought.
With chisel and mallet he chipped away,
Dreamed by night and labored by day,
Uncovered a limb, a trunk, a head,
Until the groups in triumph said;
Only the outer crust was dead.

Finished, the multitude came and praised,
Looked in wonder, delighted, amazed,
That the stars and stripes, liberty's chart—
And all that is dear to a nation's heart—

Was hid in those once rough stones.
Very great our debt to world masters,
To the genius of war and of peace,
Sculptors, inventors, thinkers, those please
Who rescue life from waste desolation,
Clothe in art achievement's decrees.

BY THE RIVER

(Ludlow Falls, Ohio)

You remember, I am thinking my darling
Of a rock girted stream far away
On whose margin we sat by the rapids
'Neath the gloom giving cedars one day
And watched the unrest of its waters
Heard its ripple of laughter and moan
As it sped o'er its low stony pathway
Flecked steed-like with droppings of foam.
It was yoked to a mill, you remember
And toiled at the slow turning wheel,
How it hurried and gave signs of worry
Like the children of Adam all feel.

It was May you remember my darling
The soft wind and sunshine were kind
And nature's great face, paled and brightened
Like man's when thought stirs the mind.
In the shallows birds bathed their feathers
And the robin found mud for her nest
The wren and the blue-bird were busy
In labor and love all were blest.
The blossoms we plucked in the shadows
Were as plain as the coat of the dove
And the violets kissed by the sunlight
Were as blue as the deep sky above.

You remember to-day too, I am thinking,

How our hearts and our lives grew as one,
As we looked down the vistas before us
And talked of the life unbegun.
How proudly the sky arched above us,
How fair stretched the world to our feet,
Then Eden of old was our Eden;
No flaming sword guarding the gate.
Tho that stream pour its waters forever,
Tho its fountains should never be dry
It never could tell forth the treasure
Of a love that never will die.

Since then, years swiftly have vanished,
Earth's sunsets and dawns paler grow;
For even, to souls that love truly
Time changes, age crowns us with snow.
O, then while we fondly remember
Let us think of the Home of the Blest
Of a place by the Life giving River
That flows by the Mansions of Rest.
When there on the marge of that river
'Neath the boughs of the health giving tree
Above change and the gloom of earth's cedars
Transplanted in love we shall be.

ROBIN'S SONG—THE COMING SPRING

Full of complaining and faulting the weather
Abusing the winter and dull skies together
I went forth at random oppressed by my mood
And strayed down a path where naked trees stood;
And there on the cold dead limb of a tree
A robin sat carolling merrily;
His heart was so glad he was forced to sing
And his song was hope in the coming spring,
He recited his joys so delightfully clear
The day grew brighter, spring seemed more near.

Then I mused on the wonderful song I had heard,
I mused on the life of the timid bird,
And saw tho he lived in the present like me,
His song was a song of futurity.
Then my own roused soul was fain to sing
Like robin its song of eternal spring.
A fairer world than this there lies
Beyond earth's winter and gloomy skies.
And man like robin if he would sing,
Must borrow his song from the coming spring.

U. S. GRANT

(Died July 23rd, 1885)

The bells of every city toll
Its death note let each cannon roll
O'er land and sea;
Let drooping flag and choking sob
Revolving press electric throb
Our massive grief express.
Our nation's boast, the silent man
With heart to do and brain to plan
In death lies motionless.

Hero on every field of life;
Abroad at home in peace and strife
Nature's own nobleman.
Mighty Colossus that thou wert—
Most sweet and generous of heart
To friend and foe.
None ever walked such heights of fame,
None from the world reaped such acclaim
As thou didst know.
Death checks abuse, calls praises forth,
O'er worthless men and men of worth,
Wise fools resolves—

Worthy of guerdon let the crowd
In sturdy phrases shout aloud
How Grant excelled.
Patient in peace, unspoiled in praise,
Unboasting bravest of the brave
When foes rebelled.

No home had malice in his heart,
Ne'er forced an oath his lips apart,
Or slanderous word.
Unlike earth's many sons of fame
Whose lives but blazon deeds of shame
Or gore's high tide.
Faithful to duty everywhere
In court, in camp, in peace and strife
The great, the simple acts of life
He glorified.

Go lay him with the noble dead
Spare pomp and show and martial tread,
Life's errand done;
Earth rests the weary aching head
When heavenward the spirit is fled
Above change and time.
Death's royal feast seems over now
And common lives are dwarfed indeed,
Time is so dowered by the dead
With deeds sublime.

CHILDREN OF THE BRAIN

(An evening piece)

The busy day has drifted by
Upon the stream of time
And noisy insects far and near
Are ringing evening's chime.

The sweet cool shadows kiss the earth
Beneath the stars' soft light;
While slow the queenly moon
Ascends her stately car of night;
Across the silent fields of space,
The breath of night is born;
And breezy fingers stir the leaves
Of trees and nodding corn.

My thoughts—the children of the brain—
Are wayward in their play
Grown restless, weary of their home,
Willful they run away.
They rummage in the attic vast
Of all the years they find
The past great storehouse of our toys
Broken and left behind.
There find again some soft warm hand,
Once held in tender grasp,
Red ruby lips and loving forms
With shy eyes downward cast.

Trinkets of joys, or starry hours
Still held, in fond embrace
By memory's holy subtle power
In spite of time and space.
I hear my mother's spirit voice
Again I am at her knee—
My tangled troubles all unwind
And leave me fresh and free.
And so I gain a moment's joy
And cheat my present cares
Living again in garden spots
That bloom amid life's tares.

Fair locks of friendship still I find
Past hopes my bosom thrill.
With tears of joy my eyes are blind
My heart is tender still.

I hear again the far off songs
Once sung so sweet and clear—
Tho light of face, and voice of friend
Are dim to eye and ear.
I thank my Maker for the past
With priceless wealth in store,
Sweet streams revisited, that flow
With freshness as of yore.

By grace released at eventide
From labor, toil and heat;
I find good thoughts and deeds
Rebloom with fragrance fresh and sweet.
I borrow for age's sandy waste
Green palm and fountain pool
Remembered joys my camping place,
Oases sweet and cool.

Happy with friend or dog or pet
Good words, or thrilling story,
That still hold place in heart and brain,
Balmed in immortal glory.
Ah, feverish unfruiting haste
That rings the curtain down
Upon the present joys we have
For those we hope to own.
How sadly short is human sight,
Life's paths how curved, when seen,
How aches the heart, when looking back
To miss what might have been.

In youth assured, we're full of light,
We rush on age to find,
Our senses so unfocused are
We are really half blind.
When will our spirits own in fee
Again, the fields of truth,
The right to which when forfeited,
Costs us perennial youth.

THE KISS OF LOVE

Psyche kissed me on the heart
When I was a boy,
Dowered me with love, a start—
Bashful, shy and coy.
And I grew a lover fond
Of earth and sea and sky.
With affection far beyond
Terra's pageantry.

Souls immortal smiled on me
Won from me my love.
Fadeless faces beckoned me
To the realms above.
And I grew a lover fond
Of science, truth, and art,
Of fellowship that lies beyond
Earth's narrowness of heart.

In fields of truth my spirit finds
Delights perpetual flow
Companionship with kindred minds,
With souls death cannot know.
Often we are guests at royal feasts,
Of changeless things above,
Soul on heart of soul may rest,
Where Deity is love.

ASSURANCE

(The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament showeth His handiwork)

I look on the wonderful sky
So permanent, peaceful and bright
Traversed by solid planets

Flooding the earth with light
My troubled heart is rested
My anxious thoughts are stilled
By the quiet and peaceful heavens,
My soul with assurance is filled.
For I know 'mong the stars, bold science
Has never discovered a flaw;
And am sure that man, like the planets,
Is safe in the arms of law.
So I ponder and muse in the moonlight
That silvers the earth and the sea
And trace through light and shadow
The plans of eternity.
And my life is enriched and widened
By everything I see,
For He who thought for the planets,
Thinketh on even me.

ONLY A PROCESSION

Since Creation the procession
Of days has come and gone;
At night obscured by darkness,
At day revealed by dawn.
How many nights were starless
And wild with sobbing storms;
How many clouds across the days,
Have trailed their somber forms.
Ah, the record is so crowded
Nothing more may find a place
Earth-Life a losing battle
Is the record of each face.
The record plain of nature
Writ on all beneath the sun.
Ere a blossom gains perfection
Its destruction is begun;
Ere the sun warms all the winters
Which the coming year enfold,

The sun himself will stagger
'Neath the effort, old and cold.

Prithee where is there in nature
Any lamp of promise found?
That revealeth aught in nature
Save a lengthened turning round.
All the planets move in circles
And the seasons come and go
Even birds are birds of passage,
All the oceans ebb and flow.
And the law of repetition
Is the edict things obey
But which shall be the victor
Growth or decay?

Out of nature comes no answer
Save the echoes which repeat
Life's bridal songs of summer
Death's winter odes of sleet.
Earth's law of reproduction
Means again produced in kind
Means that nature has no freedom
No inventiveness, no mind.
Means that servitude is written
On the march across the zones,
Of the seasons in their passage,
Of the planets falling stones.

Like the legend of the Phoenix
From the death pyre of the old
Rises every plant and creature
Which the realms of nature hold.
Like that often quoted army
That marched up the hill, then down
Nature climbs her hill of summer
In the winter marches down.
There is no light in nature

That pierces the unknown
The light that gives her splendor
Down from above is thrown.
All the books she prints in blossoms;
All the wealth she stores away;
Is but food for worms that perish,
In the limits of a day.

There is no light in nature
Save a purpose, save a plan,
Breaking through the face of matter,
Like the spirit shines thru man;
Showing that the Great Creator
Omnipresent with His plan,
Guards the earth so wisely fashioned
For the wholesome needs of man.
Creation, a long procession—
A ceaseless tramping of feet—
A grand march of the seasons,
From summer to winter's sleet.

PICTURED ROCKS

(Lake Superior)

Tossing on Superior's billows up and down
From our steamer's deck
Pictured rocks, actor like,
At us laugh and frown.
Dashed with sunlight for a moment
Through the mist and spray
Fancy sees an ancient village
Dressed for holiday.
Ruined bridge, dismantled fortress,
Minaret and tower;
Ruins older far than any
Marking human power.

Sphinxlike, on earth's rim, grim facing
Space, immensity.
Featured by colossal forces
Wild intensity,
Stands this effort of the ages
Rich in lore
Of each law's progressive force
And working power.

Galleries of mimic wonders,
Titans stock—
Idols from the stone age stranded
Here, on pictured rock.
Carved by frost king's icy fingers
Heated in the sun.
Restless wind and wave promoters,
Of the work begun.
Savage Norse kings held their revels
In your sculptured halls.
Dirges now of lapping waters
Sob beneath thy walls.

Fain to know
Who wrought these wonders
By this inland sea
Back I turn my eyes and ponder
Till I think I see
Frost and ice and snow and sunshine
Starting on a spree;
Calling wind and wave and tempest,
To arts revelry.

Giant builders met in session,
Planned and wrought and planned,
Simulating forests, mountains,
Castles weird and grand.
Broken arches mutely witness
Of a mighty past;
Rock hewn temples thick and solid,

Held in ruin's grasp.
Musing mutely, on these wonders
And their fate to be,
Turns my thoughts to human emprise,
Wrecks along time's sea.

Back her stately footsteps tracing
Noting human skill
Thebes, Babylon, Karnak, others
Births of human will
Rise and witness to achievements
In the realms of man;
Marking shorelines on the ocean
Of his widest plan.
Mighty kings, and mighty nations,
Robbed, enslaved and built,
Giant Anaks bearing record
Of ambition's tilt.

From the years flows deadly forces,
Poisonous as asp.
Ruin zones each mundane effort
With dominions grasp.
Yet not wholly doth aught perish
In this world, we say:
Matter, form and beauty, only
Changes day by day.

O ye rocks, by nature fashioned,
Temples, altars, free,
Welcoming each season's worship,
Creedless, grand are ye!
Blest by sun and stars forever,
Wisdom's Holy See.
Vibrant winds and waves of water
Glorious minstrelsy,
Nature's needy hosts forever
Worship God in thee.

COMMUNION

*They are friends whose paths of life meet in the
temple of the same beautiful thoughts*

I meet my friend;
At once the light grows sweet,
The air breathes purer,
All things seem complete.

Cares scud away
As clouds kissed by the sun
Peace fills the heart
And discontent is gone.

Hand clasped in hand—
All pathways to the heart
Fling wide the doors
That keep our souls apart.

Thoughts ripple into words
In rhythmic tune,
Like songs of birds
In happy days of June.

With masks thrown off
We push each veil aside,
Unbreast our hearts
And nothing seek to hide.

In sweet communion;
Filled with peace and rest;
On sorted truths
Our hungry souls we feast.

Whole loaves few find
Unmixed with tears, regret,
But crumbs of good abound,
Love, hope sustains us yet.

Dead triumphs yield anew
Their mummied sweets;
Past stain and glory
Each its notice gets.

Experience, feeble torch,
The statesman's guide,
Suns a past world
Where everything has died.

From out the charnal-house
Of husk and chaff,
Incongruous memories
Make us weep and laugh.

Thence bring our relics,
Lay them side by side,
A sad review that humbles
Human pride.

The light fades swiftly
When the day is done.
Thick doubtful shadows
Rest the past upon.

And yet dear faces
Like the light of stars
Rise in our hearts,
To cheer us unawares.

Recount past joys,
Old disappointments tell,
Kind words shrink cares,
Words too, our pleasures swell.

Perched on the circle
Of our highest hopes,
The future's stubborn

Door before us ope's.

Thoughtful and silent,
Leaning o'er life's brink,
By torch of faith
We strive to know, to think.

Lights go before us,
Torches of hope and love;
By simple faith we follow
Where reason fails to prove.

But joy we find in the future,
Pure fountains refreshing sweet;
Springs of immortal nectar
That rise our lips to meet.

We glow with health and beauty
And our souls in faith are strong;
We are immortal, we are happy
And eternity is long.

EDUCATION

There is no perfect brain,
No mind all good,
No spirit free from sin,
No faultless man.
And yet, the greatest and the least
Thinks, speaks, writes and teaches
His faulty wisdom to the world.

Schools sow their theories,
Evil and good in every field;
Hence, diverse as all the whims of mind
Is the mixed crop our poor brains yield.
Black is not white, tho science
Shakes the fact and breeds a doubt

Gainsays the bottom facts on which we rest—
Blows common truths like straws about.

Tho every sage should rise
And to each youth explain
Every experience (that comes to flesh)
Minute and wisely, as Solomon
Wrote on vegetation, from the
Frailest lichen to the stateliest tree;
Would it avail to satisfy
Our longing after the untried?

Nay! ear, eye, smell, taste, touch,
Every cell of brain and capability of heart
Imperfect, yet imperious,
Demands experience for itself.
Experience is the university of God
The school in which His children
Learn the lessons of this dual life.

One thrill of love that spreads its color
On the cheek and conquers the fierce eye
With tenderness—mother's development—
Is worth more than all the mere recitals
Ever made by tongue or pen.
Thought must tent within the brain
In mighty companies, before the
Glowing embers of their entertainment
Warms into life our cardinal desires.

There is no nourishment in hearsay,
Small satisfaction in the untried,
Endeavor, action, experience,
Are the meat on which every Caesar feeds.

MENTAL GUESTS

Rare grains of thought
In some far off brain
Have grown and fruited.
Like fog from the main
Thought is blowing toward me—
A possible rain of new ideas
May visit my brain.

Mental vitalities live, no doubt
Wander at will the world about
And stop to brood
In the brains of men
When condition favors.
He is a prophet from God to men
Who welcomes these guests
To the upper chamber
When Deity entertains.
He bares his soul and turns his ear
To catch the stir of coming events.

The spirit realm above nature lies
Far sweeping with potent energies;
The birdlike soul here lives between
An upper and a nether scene.
Two worlds our home, yet we dwell
Chiefly below the spiritual.
Resting on earth with head thrown back,
Ideas on their meteor track we plainly see,
We catch their light, we feel the glow
And brain, heart, soul, their youth renew.

RIGHT THINKING

Thoughts grow in the brain like flowers
Or else they grow like weeds;
We can seldom account for either,
Seldom know whence come the seeds.

When the beautiful good and true
Pre-empt the heart and the brain
Clean minded men and women grow,
As flowers in sunshine and rain.

But if seeds of evil and passion
Spring up and choke the good;
Sin will nest in the heart and then
Uncanny becomes life's brood.

The will must ever be regnant,
Wisdom must choose our way,
And conscience obeyed and honored
Never snubbed or sent away.

Like the price of eternal freedom
Must vigilance be set down
As the price each human being pays
For a character sweet and sound.

SOME DAY

(The truth shall make us free)

These gates of flesh so bar the way
While in our present thrall
By eye of faith alone we see
God's writing on the wall.

Some day the viewless latch will lift
And nature's doors divide
And the closed chambers of the world
To us will open wide.

Then shall the shores of truth appear
The fogs all blown away
And we escaped from toil and fear
Shall land and know the way.

BIRDS OF PASSAGE

Come mate and plume your feathers,
The time has come to sing,
For the sun is throwing kisses
At the earth, it is nearly spring.
Soon, all life will feel the rapture,
'Tis time we are on the wing.

Let our northward flight be merry,
Make the air with music ring,
For the sun is throwing kisses
At the earth, it is nearly spring.
Let us join the birds of summer
Life northward goes a-wooing.

There's no time to lose in going,
Soon mating time it will bring,
For the sun is throwing kisses
At the earth, it is nearly spring.
Let us now prepare for summer
And the duties it will bring.

We shall need a nest and shelter;
We must toil as well as sing,
When the ardent kiss of summer
Shall bid adieu to spring.
There is pay for toil and brooding
In the nestlings it will bring.

The world will be the brighter—
For the songs our children sing—
When the sun, the king of summer,
Shall throw kisses at next spring.

DREAMS OF LIGHT

Shall they too fade, those dreams of light,
That lift our souls at times beyond the night
Where purpose rises 'bove the grind of care
Spirit communings on the wings of prayer;
Brief visits to the heart's lost home
Where hope casts not its fruit
Where love hath speech to suit
Where want's keen voice is mute,
Moments supreme and wonderfully fair.

When high resolves out of the heart takes flight
And swiftly lift us into God's clear sight,
Where for the moment, there's no blot or stain,
No ache in heart or trouble in the brain,
Peaks crowned with light above this level plain;
Shall they remain, eternally possessed, remain?
Or are they Jack-O-Lantern's light
Doomed to swift death and endless night?

Dear Heart, dream on, dream dreams of light;
Sweet, noble thoughts soar up on pinions white,
And high resolves oft make life's darkest way
Kindle with radiance, like the dawn of day.
Crown one swift minute with the glow of hope,
Point one dull eye along the upward slope.
Smite with love's sweet and matchless power
Cold-hearts to live in warmth, if but an hour.

Lives short or long are mostly commonplace
Immortal glory smites but once each face.
When on a face of flesh that sweet light falls
Doubts meet defeat, as truth upon us calls.
What we here briefly taste of bliss
Foreshadows triumph's final dewy kiss.
Tho death here claims, the most we do or dare;
Still dream of light, of life, not death and care.
Rare is the joy of living one brief day

Where love and life at home immortal play.
They who look up with grief are never choked,
No door of faith and hope is ever locked.
Companioned, even now with flesh and blood
Souls may unslave sometimes, and take the road,
Wherever choice invites, or beauty dwells,
Pluck flowers of truth or spirit immortelles,
Rare Lotus Flowers that feast the soul—a view
Here now called dreams, bright-shadows of the true.
And sometime, when the last tear shall be shed—
Glory shall smite our cheeks, all troubles fled.

THE LAND OF HOPE

The land of hope
With friendly shores,
Lies far beyond
Life's known Azores,
Whence we too sail
Thru storm and shine,
With locks oft wet
With dew and brine.
All, all must sail the stream of time.

Hope never fails,
Tho far we sail
On unknown seas,
To reach some gate—
Tho long endure
Some heavy fate,
The torch of Hope
Still lights some shore,
Where we arrived on time,
Shall find life asks no more.

Hope betters life
By all that's good,

Illumines death
With cloudless light,
Reveals bright dawns
Where reason fails;
Where eyes see nothing
Hope sheds light.

From ports of youth
We sail and sail!
O'er unknown seas
Toward longed for shores
Where doubts shall end
The best be gained.
Where faith finds God
And all is good
At last is good.

Fair is the land
The soul describes
Beyond the sight
Of human eyes,
There some day
Disappointment's night
Shall vanish into sweetest light,
And we shall find the land of Hope.

ON SHORE

Youth's restless tide was swelling in my veins,
And endless stretched the world before my sight;
Ambition stirred my soul with longed for gains,
And ardent hope clothed every path with light.
I struggled for the prizes of the world;
For wealth, position and a deathless name,
Time thinned my blood and sapped my strength
And faded every color worn by fame.
I noted everything within my sight,
Success and failure on life's level main;

Wrecks mark the conquest of time's stormy night,
The end of muscle, plans, material gain.
I saw the mounds, the bodies washed ashore
And knew matter alone was wrecked,
The Soul, unharmed had reached the other shore.

CHEERFUL ADVICE

Never let your heart be troubled
Note the sunshine sweet—
Laugh and all your joys are doubled
Smile on all you meet.
Friends will give you hearty welcome
While you bring good cheer;
If with songs and smiles you come,
All will praise you dear.

Never murmur or complain
At what has been, or is;
Accept things as they are, in fine,
Make them a source of bliss.
Frown not though your lot is hard
Smile away your pain
Remember joy wins reward—
Sorrow is pleasure slain.

THE TRAGEDY OF HATE

The tides come in
The tides go out;
The sea is never at rest,
By vexing winds
It is blown about
Yet follows law's behest.

The heart, red sea of life;
The heart is never at rest;
Hath tides of love

And tides of hate
Passion currents that never abate,
Obeying life's behest.

O, heart of love so sweet
Love maketh life complete
So sweet is love.
But O, if filled with hate
Love meets a dreadful fate
Hate killeth love.

The heart, red sea of life,
Where love should rest;
Hath storms of aches and strife
Obeying life's behest.
Yet, when by grace made sweet,
Love killeth hate complete.

I HELD HER HAND

I held her hand, and felt the thrill
Of pure warm blood.
I looked into her eyes and saw
Love's brimming flood.

Her face was fair, her graceful form
Outrivalled art,
Sweet, every grace of womanhood
Bloomed in her heart.

I held her hand, and while the thrill
Of new life trembled in my soul
I realized a touch, a glance
May sweep us under Love's control.

True word, sweet speech tho potent all,
Can ne'er make known
The power of speechless glance and touch
That guards Love's Throne.

I held her hand, I saw her face
In spirit rapture glow
When Love's lamp burns within the heart
There is light enough for two.

I held her hand, I felt
The currents of a life
In bounding billows flow,
They broke upon my own, and so I know
On all our common senses love builds
And rules below.

GUEST OF TWO WORLDS

The dim unknown around us lies
Where shadowy truths before our eyes
Flit to and fro;
But what they mean, whence come or go,
How few with certainty may know—
Spirit and matter mingle so
In strange disguise.

I wish I knew what matter is,
Its wondrous forms and tendencies
Of which I am part,
Ever the soul asks questions here.
Answers are faint, from far and near
Some voice commands the listening ear,
Some love the heart.

Our souls leap with a glad surprise
When visions far and faint arise
To lure us on.
When we have crossed the border land
Will this side vanish, sight and heart,
Will disappointments all depart,
Will doubts be gone?

The spirit world around us lies,
We strain our eager, restless eyes
For higher good.
Like Tantalus, we seek the prize.
But ever disappointments rise
Before is reached the full supply
Of living food.

Do lilies know why lilies grow,
Or brooks or roses why they are so,
So beautiful?
Nature in high or low estate
Is hidden, locked and bound in fate;
Tethered, each life sings to its mate
The dreams of love.

Each creature hath appointed place,
Its span of time, its point in space,
And load of care.
Lichen and worm and mortal man
Are parts of one gigantic plan.
Each has a sphere to fill, yet can
O'er flow with grace.

Love, song and beauty, bloom and scent
Are gifts; rewards of merit meant
To tempt us up the steep ascent
Of nature's plan.
And when we gain earth's topmost peak,
We stand alone; with naught to seek
But God and man.

And having reached that high estate,
Where nature can't participate
In higher quest.
Horizon widened light still haze,
Backward and forward, both I gaze,

Asking two worlds in dumb amaze,
Of which I am guest.

I wish I knew what spirit is,
Its potent possibilities,
Of which I am a part.
Why do we waste earth, life and love?
Why thirst futurity to prove?
Why pants the soul to rise above
Earth's true warm heart?

Earth light is sweet, and love is sweet,
Tho clothed in flesh our spirits meet
While here below.
Here pleasure's streams are sweet and wide,
Here wisdom's plans in law abide.
Why thirst we for the other side,
The unknown to know?

One luminous hour by love's decree
Comes once on earth to you, to me,
By God's command,
Yet loud or low we make complaint
Of wind and tide, sinner and saint,
And oft 'twixt fact and faith we faint
While here we stand.

It must be in some lovelier place
Redeemed, immortal, face to face,
At home we'll stand.
Where there's no death or lack of room
Where not one blossom casts its bloom—
With truth, love, God and friends,
On either hand.

About the well of life I read,
Shall gather all the spirits freed
Whose hope, love, faith,

On well fought fields 'gainst selfishness,
Bigotry, greed, hate, littleness,
Won victories in earth's shadow-land
O'er doubt and death.

IMMORTELLES

Let us gather each day the flowers of thought
That bloom in the fields of the mind,
Let the best in a fragrant verse be wrought,
Thought in color and bloom let us bind.
There's beauty enough in the commonplace
To make life an unending song.
If we garner the beautiful day by day
No year should seem barren or long.
Such daily gleanings would make a song
Sweet mete for the harp of life,
For no other music our ears should long,
Music is the blossom of strife.

Of rarest flowers there will be no lack
When each act and effort shall bloom.
The simplest things well done in fact,
Bear blossoms of rich perfume.
The royal flowers that bloom above
Their common neighbors, are Hope and Love;
While vines of Friendship with tendrils curled
Trail wonderful blossoms throughout the world.
Humanity's soil is so blest by the Lord
That fragrance follows kind act and word.
Earth's simplest service suffers no loss,
Tho rendered 'twixt thieves upon the cross.

NATURE'S VICTORY

A hectic flush is on the leaves,
A change pervades the air
Death welcomes winter, verdure grieves,
Life struggles with despair.

Nature in pain, tho looking well,
Winter is surely near;
When Heims departs the buds will swell
Spring comes with every year.

A surface sorrow sweeps the earth,
Yet all is well we know;
Spring will return, give nature birth,
After the north winds blow.

This annual lesson nature gives
To prove death's but asleep;
Nature for losses never grieves
Her tryst with life she keeps.

Sad hearts, beyond death's grassy mounds
Dismiss your tears and see
Unfading spring is on its rounds—
Behold life's victory.

THE SUN OF THE SOUL

The dead leaves of autumn around us were falling,
Tired nature was hastening to close up the year;
To the South! the South! the song birds were call-
ing
As I strolled, a young lover with Phyllis my dear.

We two had known friendship in youth's happy
hours
When spring scatter'd blossoms on valley and
plain;
Our fond love had shared the warm glow of sum-
mer,
Like nature when blest with dew, sunshine and
rain.

A silence prophetic pervaded the hours,
We paled, for the North-voice whispered of death,

To lovers most shocking, no grief for the flowers
Wed to ruin all nature seemed holding its breath.

From the hill tops we noted the day was declining
Watched the slant rays—from the West stream-
ing on.

When Phyllis—her head on my shoulder reclining—
Said: "Is love the soul's sun when the day-god's
withdrawn?"

Here hearts have their winters, with God are the
reasons;

Shall we still be in love when the years are all
gone?"

"Dear Phyllis," I answered,—“The soul has its sea-
sons;

Love, the sun of the Soul brings eternity's dawn.”

DAYS OF HEAVEN ON THE EARTH

Wandering one day,
By a clear winding stream;
I met spring on the way,
Earth was clothed in a dream.

The birds sang of love;
Hope sprang from each sod,
And above and below
Was the glory of God.

I exclaimed in my soul
What a beautiful mind
God must have, to control
Just one day of this kind.

Peace, wisdom had kissed,
Smiles banished each frown,

'Twas a day to earth promised
From Heaven sent down.

Encompassed with glory
Seemed each step I trod:
Earth was full of His Story,
As the heaven of God.

THE GARDENER'S PROPOSAL

My heart is a garden, my lady fair,
It has wonderful soil, all plants grow there,
But the good alone will bloom and bear
If sunned with love and tended with care.

Will you be my gardener my lady fair,
Are you willing to toil, to wait, forbear?
My heart is my garden my lady fair;
Will you sun it with love and tend it with care?
My heart is my garden my lady fair,
Will you sun it with love and keep it with care?

Tho my garden's well sheltered my lady fair;
Unwatched, untended the weeds grow there.
It may cost you sleep, pain, tears and prayer,
To be my gardener my lady fair,
It may cost you sleep, pain, tears and prayer,
To be my gardener my lady fair.

Yes I'll be your gardener my gentle sir,
What cannot be helped I will meekly endure.
My heart like yours was fashioned for bliss,
And my mouth like yours for love's best kiss,
My heart like yours, was fashioned for bliss,
And my mouth like yours for love's best kiss.

Yes, I'll be your gardener my gentle sir:

But my heart needs tending lest hate grow there.
If you'll guard it with kindness, keep it with care
We both shall be happy with love to spare.
If you'll guard it with kindness, keep it with care,
We both shall be happy with love to spare.

We both must be gardeners, then he said,
For it seems each heart is in constant need,
To sun it with love and sweeten this life,
We both must be gardeners, man and wife,
To sun it with love and sweeten this life,
We both must be gardeners, man and wife.

FATHER'S FACE

(A Study)

How often I looked in his manly face
With the wondering eyes of a child,
And tried to answer the question, why
He silently frowned or smiled.

I knew his burden of daily toil,
I knew of his measure of care,
A living to wring from hostile soil
For a family schooling and care.

For a wife and children have many wants
And with children their needs increase
While demands of charity, church and state
Are enough to wreck one's peace.

Yet he was never a moody man
Tho of contemplative air;
His spirit and form were straight, unbent
With the burdens of toil and care.

The lights on his face were shades of thought
That fell from the sky of his mind;
I saw the shadows but strove in vain
To read the thoughts behind.

I have seen his face aglow with light
As bright as the morning sun,
Increase to noon, then wane to night,
When the labor of thought was done.

And again a light as peaceful and sweet
As the moon's o'er spread his face
When thoughts of future peace and rest
Shone in from the land of grace.

Aye! good and evil their battles fight
In every heart and brain,
While the lights and shadows on each face
Are banners of joy and pain.

OUTGROWN

The past has been rich
With beautiful thoughts,
With manifold pleasures
Which soon show their spots,
Good friends with bright faces,
Great hearts full of cheer,
From the past's faded blossoms
Sweet fragrance drifts here.
But the faces once bright
Have grown thin and pale

Good stories oft told,
Like old wit has grown stale.
There was beauty and strength,
Much goodness and worth
But it all mixed with clay,

Change rules in the earth.
The past had its feasts
For the stomach and brain
But the relish has vanished,
They tempt not again.

By experience we learn
In the midst of life's years
The eye that looks back
Soon is brimming in tears.
Ever empty of hand
And hungry of heart,
The present is full of longing;
Man aimlessly turns 'twixt
Memory and hope
From past and future thronging.
For rummage the past the best one can,
It is ever outgrown by the growing man.
Life's a heart throb, plus the future.

Little past we find,
That suits our mood
That comforts the mind
Or soothes the blood.
For the victories we prize
Have never been won;
The great things we would do,
We have never begun;
The story we would write
Has never been told,
The poem is future
We long to unfold.

Our lives must ever
Be lived anew,
No matter how clever

Age brings faults to view
Love and friendship
May not conceal them.

But the future invites us
And freshens our blood;
There, is room for ambition,
There, hope pours her flood;
Immortal is life in the future.

Forth then with the dawn—each morning
Brave of purpose cheerful and strong,
Here toil and endeavor are nothing,
For the future is endlessly long.

The steps of the stairs we're ascending
Pass from lesser to greater on high.
Up, up, eager, earnest keep climbing!
Lest found undersized when you die.

EGYPT AND THE NILE

Just as of old, the Nile is flowing on
Thru leagues of sandy plains,
Cleaving great deserts hot and lone.
Five thousand years of life lie dead
Beside this fruitful stream,
Marked by crushed cities, temples,
Homes, that show no taper's gleam.

Lifegiving, fresh and sweet thy current flows,
Mile wide thru leagues of drifting sand,
Causing on right and left a barren-land
To live and blossom as the rose.
O river, thou art life, heart, blood
To everything that needs a draught of bliss,
Thy far off source sends treasure like a flood,
Making a land of plenty laziness and love.

O, Egypt, great and mighty was thy past,
Yet all thy grandeur was to ruin wed,
Thy sons and daughters all are mummied,
Thy wondrous tombs and palaces time ravished,
Great learning wasted, art and library gone,
Ruin only, lives mentor, as time rushes on.
Thy gods once worshiped of color and stone;
Now merchandise only; their godship has flown.

The tongues of thy ruins stoutly proclaim
How once, your children, sought pleasure and fame.
Your rulers, builders and toilers are gone,
Sol smiles on the land the river flows on.
O ghosts of the past, we behold you
Sipping bliss from the vanishing years;
Glory, honor, achievements humbled
E'en your sphinx sadly mar'd seems in tears.

Your obelisks captured, antiques shipped abroad,
All nations enriched by what you have sowed.
Of boundless abundance the glad news was borne,
Foreign want coined the proverb, "In Egypt is corn."
Once country of refuge, broad minded and fair,
The world sought thy learning, enjoyed thy care.
Jacob, Abraham, Joseph and Mary came here,
Sought wisdom, bread, safety—thy visitors were.

Cleopatra's wild love, of thy deserts was born
Her ripe form and beauty a Nile-river charm.
All gone: yet they jewel thy splendor of old;
Men, women of worth are more than pure gold.
Kings depart, toilers die, works remain,
Time wastes all monuments builded in vain.

Rare Memnon, whose music once greeted the
dawn—
Rent, mangled stands silent as change rushes on,
The march of the modern, the new, but proclaim

That waste of centuries burgeons thy fame.
O river, O Egypt, with dead like the sand!
Ruin girdles thy past, decrepit's the land.
Look on Memphis, on Karnak what time has with-
stood,
Hear a miracle voice, 'The Nile's turned to blood,
Note thick darkness falling, deliverance night;
Sun, moon, stars obscured—three days void of light.
Royal heart, ten times relentless in the long ago,
Grieved the voice of mercy calling, Let my people
go!
Ego, vaulting pride, ambition, stubborn was, and
dumb,
When the first born of your people died in every
home.
The god of nations rules, hath called thee down!
Empires like men to final judgment come.
'Thou cradle place of life from first to last,
What restless centuries have o'er thee past.

The God of Nations rules! past is thy day
Empires like men, His sovereign will obey.
The earth abides—The works of men decay!
Still as of old the sun bestows its heat,
The moon and stars their stately rounds repeat.
Just as of old the sourceful Nile flows on,
Change rules on earth, thy mighty hosts are gone!

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

(Steamship Celtic)

I love, I love the flowing sea,
Its boundless might, its mystery,
Its many moods, its smiles and frowns,
The matchless sky and clouds it owns.

What restless winds play o'er thy breast!
The moon disturbs thy daily rest
For on the Empire of the sea
Force rules with wanton majesty.
Titanic, mighty, full of awe
Cared for and safe in lap of law.

The centuries have come and gone
Still as in youth thy tides roll on.
O, cheerful, mighty, jovial sea—
I look, I love, I envy thee.
On land all things are full of scars
But thy deep breast no wounding mars
Thy cemet'ries are out of sight;
Thy troubles buried in the night
No shaft, no tomb shows pride of grief
In silence sorrow finds relief.

Thy legends are thy broken spars
Thy sentinels the silent stars;
Yet in thy realms of peaceful sleep
'Mid flower gardens safe and deep
Life blossoms, lives and moves about
Free from the cankering cares of doubt.
If but my pilot sails with me
I'm safe on land, safe on the sea,
And when thy waves shall roll no more
I shall have reached some farther shore
Unharm'd, to live forevermore.

HOPES THAT FAIL

Under the Lindens
They walked one night
Clasping each a hand;
The stars shone bright
Their talk was sweet
All vistas of life seemed grand.

He was a soldier, manly, straight,
She was a maiden fair;
He coveted medals won in fight,
She the jewels of love and care;
Each trusted the future far or near,
Both, strong of heart and hand.

Engaged they parted, as lovers may,
He to war and the fields of strife,
She prayed for peace, the coming day
When she should become his wife.
Alas for hopes and loves that fail
In this human span of life.

He in a hopeless charge was slain,
She died of a broken heart.
And over the Lindens now they say
When moon and stars shine grand
A phantom pair glides thru the air,
Each holding the other's hand.

MONTREAUX, SWITZERLAND

Between the mountains' swelling breasts
Montreaux in charming beauty rests;
Proud of her castle, lake and towers,
Her ivied walls and fragrant flowers.
O'er town and lake the white gulls fly,
On terraced slopes the vineyards lie.
Arched over all a sapphire sky
Stretches like fields in Arcady.

And all who come too soon must go
Beyond its spell; and only know
The name it bears. To all it seems
A city set in matchless dreams,
Of waking dawns and fairy nights
Of nature's changing charms, delights;

Where soul and body both are fed
Of those who pass with reverent tread.

THE JUNGFRAU

(Switzerland)

The Red October o'er the Alps
Strays painted in autumnal hues;
I turn my eyes from slope to slope,
Behold a thousand changing views.

Thru valleys rich the Leutschine flows,
Fed by unnumbered Alpine streams,
A nature-song of murmuring sounds
That soothes the ear and calls to dreams.

Snow veiled, in glaciers clad
The vestal Jungfrau stands;
Her frozen beauty blushing in the sun,
A winter Masterpiece in ice, a nun.

The drowsy bells betray the grazing lands,
And scattered chalets tell of home and love;
Hath earth a setting, anywhere, more grand
Or nature stairs to nobler views above.

THE MOTHER-NESS OF NATURE

The night is a great black mammy,
Who with motherly love, they say;
Receives the setting sun in her arms
And closes the eyes of day.

Then the noisy earth swings silent
Thru the dusky fields of space;
While stars keep watch in the distance
O'er the sleeping human race.

As man—I think and ponder—
As a weary child I find
The motherliness of nature
Founts in the eternal mind.

THE MAN IS NOT A FAILURE WHO DIES TRYING

Is the world any richer because I was born?
I have labored in broad fields of wheat, of corn.
Some things I have written, some things have said,
Great things I intended, but little I did.

For self, for others, I garnered some pelf,
But is the world richer because of myself?
Some things I mended some things I made,
Much, much, I have ruined, learning life's trade.

Is the world any better because of my birth?
Have I added aught to humanity's worth?
Has my struggle for others, my effort for gain,
Put a smile on a face, eased one heart of pain?

Life what is thy errand, fame what is thy worth?
In the end does it matter, condition or birth?
Human hosts, good and evil forever go forth,
Love, service mark man, of more than mere earth.

AS MAN THINKETH SO IS HE

The child that oftenest ponders the right
And seldomest thinks of the wrong
Will develop a character cheerful and bright,
Symmetrical, straight and strong.

While the one who oftenest ponders the wrong
And shrinks from the truth's clear light
Will be crooked, uncanny, and cruel if strong,

A tiger that preys by night.

The pursuit of the mind is a law of life
That springs from a natural bent;
It is choice makes us evil or good,
And choice betrays the intent.

IF GOD BE GOD FOLLOW HIM

Diana lost her worshipers,
Long, long ago.
Lost her everything but art
She had fallen so;
A thing of trade, Apollo stands
A shapely figure, true,
No Devotee he now commands
He lost his godship too.

Fair Greece, proud Rome, old Pagar world
Your idols have decayed,
The years have wasted all your gods,
The greatest ever made.
The wisdom of the centuries
Has pulled their shrines apart;
A god debased is worthless now,
Save as a thing of Art.

When truth and light came to the world
The false religions fled,
Since Christ the crucified arose
All other gods are dead.
Now Christ's are all the worshipers
He lives, He reigns, He saves;
He vanquished sin and death and hell
And calls men from their graves.

THE DEGENERATE

There are those who will rebel;
There are feet turned down to hell;
Wintry hearts froze hard by hate,
Brains like barren fields turned waste.

Drifting farther from the right,
Drifting farther from the light,
Hearing naught but evil's voice,
Drifting from the power of choice.

Growing sour day by day,
Caring less what people say,
Sowing tares in bitter mood
Reaping crime's unsavory food.

Tarnishing the family name,
Lost at last all sense of shame,
Harking but to evil's voice,
Drifting from the power of choice.

AFTER MANY YEARS

Once more then we meet
As in days gone before
May our hearts be as sweet
As in youth's sunny hour.

Shall we kiss? Yes, kiss
For the days of Langsyne.
What, a tear? Pray excuse me,
Don't bathe me in brine.
A smile is the banner of bliss,
True joy is immortal my dear.

Tho our lips summer dried
Tap no fountain of youth
Tho there's snow in our hair

Yet, while love warms the heart
Sweet springtime immortal is there.

I see by drops that moisten your face
'Tis a shower the summer clouds bring,
The rose on your cheek, the love in your eye,
Burst forth as the blossoms of spring.

THE SPEECH OF YEARS

(To an Octogenarian)

Four score and one
Swift years have run
Their changeful circuits round the sun
Since first your baby life begun.
Today review
Your joys and fears,
Con o'er life's wealth
Sweet gain of years.

How stands the score
Of wrong and right?
How many days were black as night?
How many full of love and light?
I know we say
Half night, half day;
Hast found it so? There is no night
To those who look above for light.

Thru one and eighty
Years complete
Your heart kept tender
Warm and sweet.
And so I know
Love conquers woe;
Light from above down streaming, sweet,
Keeps rising shadows 'neath the feet.

PROGRESS

By the slow logic of the brain
We forge our laws
Toiling to trace the hidden chain
Effect and cause.
Pruned by the judgment of mankind
Things better grow.
But wisdom from experience learned
Comes hard and slow.

Because the logic of events
Like wrong and right
Are relative to time and place
And point of sight.
Events at times amass
And force results;
Life's best watched efforts
Are not free from faults.

Experience too, whatever it may be
Is relative to every you and me;
Results lack uniformity, alas!
Who knows, O changeful earth,
What time will bring to pass.

TO A CANARY

Tell me philosophic mite,
The secret of your singing.
All day long you pour your song
Like joy bells gladly ringing.

Science says, your brain's too small
For reasoning and thinking.
What endowment if at all,
Can you boast but singing?

Just a speck of life and song,
Yet, you are happy all day long,
Trilling music sweet and clear
Shaking tons of atmosphere.

With one talent, only one,
Your song lasts from sun to sun.
Man, joy's secret would you know?
Use your talents as you go.

Then no trouble will befall
Palace, cottage, hovel, stall;
Use your gifts however small,
Condition matters not at all.

Were it right I'd envy you,
For the path of song you leave.
Man more brilliantly endowed
Mars his days with grief and wrong,
Discord mars his every song.

VOICES OF THE NIGHT

The night drags slowly by,
A meteor crosses the sky
A fox howls on the hill;
The winds are laid and still
I watched the spectral moon
Roll west thru the stars away,
I look to the east and cry, come soon
O, sun, with the light of day!

The horned owl calls to his mate,
"Sad, sad is the story of fate."
The watch dog's dolefull bark
Quickens ghost wraiths in the dark.
I note the procession move on,
The sounds and sights of the night,

I hear as I vigil alone,
The song of a singer that's gone.

Hoof beats with no rider in sight;
So, slowly the night drags by
Its voices and sounds toward the light;
I feel its chill in my heart—
Pale stars keep watch in the sky,
I look, and listen, and start,
O, fain would I rest and sleep,
But my eyelids refuse to close;
Troubled is the vigil I keep,
Akin to night's restless repose.

THE DEAD PRESIDENT

(James A. Garfield)

O, Nation of triumphs weep sadly to-day,
At last it is finished; the assassin hath sway.
Our chieftain hath perished more ignobly far
Than by hands of injured ones fell the late Czar.

Pride over the nation breathed boastful and loud
From earth's every quarter we called to the crowd
They came sowing evil abroad in the land
Bold envy has triumphed, low schemers have
planned.

Now the heart of the Nation is heavy as lead,
For a righteous man ceaseth, a martyr is dead;
Each state drape in mourning, give gladness no place
For the giant of sorrow has smitten each face.

And shadows of trouble hang heavy and chill
On mountain and river, on valley and hill.
The White House is silent, profaned by a crime
Charged up to our freedom, reproach of all time.

O, nation of progress and conquerless might,
Give heed to the lesson, look well to the blight,
The license of evil, the tares 'mongst the wheat,
Lest the shame of the present prove ruin complete.

Ye waves of Atlantic chant sadly to-day
The Nation's great heart doth at Elberon lay;
And our breast heaving sobs, irrespective of clan
All join you, lamenting the martyr, the man.

THE CONQUEROR

*[Fame is more than an occasional ride
In the ink chariot of the public press]*

Behold the hero of the day
A simple modest man of clay
Who won the heights of great renown
Ignoble actions frowning down.
A kindly soul and mind agree
With modest manners, all will see,
When Honor comes.

He won the giddy heights of fame
With spotless hands unsullied name.
The greatest nation's foremost man
With heart to dare and brain to plan
Has wrought, achieved victorious days.
Do not forget noise is not praise,
When Merit comes.

Familiar he with noise of war
Death sounding guns of common roar.
Give the true hero nobler praise,
Than yell and steam and powder raise.
Wreathes immortelles, things fadeless give!

That, like his own great acts will live,
When Valor comes.

PEARLS AND ROSES

O, where are my pearls and roses,
My jewels of long ago?
So many and each one priceless!
In youth they charmed me so.

I know they have not perished,
Tho they vanished long ago;
They still abound on happy shores,
Where eyes with youth are aglow.

MOTHER

She wore no ring on her finger
No gem ever flashed in her ear
A rose sometimes for a breast pin
A flower sometimes in her hair;
But resorted never to fashion
To make herself more fair.

Her heart, the home of affection
Where children and friends abide
A Holy of Holies for all she loved,
Where welcome was never denied.
O, beautiful face of mother!
Was ever a brow more fair?
In her cultured mind at eighty
Sweet flowers of thought bloomed there.

'Neath the silent stars, I remember
The tender light of her eyes,
And her lessons of warning and counsel,
Like halos of wisdom arise.

In spite of the trouble, care and sin,
And flying years, I am with her again,
Under boyhood's wonderful skies.
She was sister to daughter,
To son she was brother,
Bearing burdens of others, as if no bother,
So deitylike the love of a mother,
Its fragrance never dies.

THE HOME RUN

*[Who runs unspent, breaks down sooner or later
And returns to what he professes to have left]*

The light is sweet at dawning time,
And life is sweet in youthful prime;
Love, flowers, bird songs cheer the day,
Listless we dream and lose our way;
Alas, we wake to find, too soon,
Life's dial marks the hour of noon
 With nothing done.

Then, with o'er hurried effort still,
To make amend, each thinks he will
Paint this, write that, another day
Turn some great feat, another way.
Night comes, time ends, all too soon
Death calls—with errand still undone
 We homeward run.

ABSENT MINDED

The thoughts of the brain
 Like doves from their cote,
Forever fly in and out;
 In neighborhood flocks

At times they come,
Again there is none about.

Into infinite space all fled,
The souls great errand their quest;
Seeking truth in limitless fields;
Seeking God and His behest,
Seeking peace for soul unrest.

And so there are times in life,
When we're not at home to self;
Yet friends, who unnoticed go by,
Say, "Sleepy and churlish elf."
They lack the insight to know
One is absent from home to self.

FLOWERS AT MIDNIGHT

Of what are the flowers dreaming
When the heavy night's half thru,
Do they dream of the coming morning
When the sun will kiss the dew?
Their lips shall drip with dew drops
When the dawning has begun
And glory shall tremble in all the drops
For each drop shall hold a sun.

Do they dream of coming splendor
When song birds wake the grove?
Of a pure maid's charming candor
Who artlessly tells them her love?
Who woos them to win their legends
Of fairy and fay and sprite
Saying, "Are ye the thoughts of angels?
Love's breath from the kingdom of light?
Or only the hopes of true lovers
Blown out of their hearts in the night."

Do you dream and weave in the starlight
Fresh garments to charm the view?
Stirred still by the words of the master
"No king is apparelled like you!"
Enough what he said to the lilies,
Their glory untarnished with pride
Makes them purest and sweetest of flowers
We can give to corpse or bride.

WEARY OF WINTER

When will the song birds come again
And the north winds cease to blow?
I long for the green and sunny fields,
I am tired of ice and snow.

The streams are locked in the frozen hills,
And my life is chilled to hear
The raving winds in the naked woods,
And the hunter's heartless cheer.

True, on the ice I hear the ring
Of the skater's flashing steel,
But I envy not the daring leaps,
Or wintry joys they feel.

For chill is the heart of nature,
And cheerless the light of day,
The moon and stars tho' bright, shine cold
From their distant fields of gray.

I long for the time to come again
When nature shall wake from her night;
And yield to the rich, the magic spell
Of summer's enchanting light.

With summer's pulse come tides of life
That gladden our world with song;

That help each soul to a higher love,
As we wander earth's flowers among.

Many are the joys of a summer's day,
And I long for the time to come,
When the air will thrill with songs of birds,
And the orchards be white with bloom.

MISS NATURA

O, I met her in the Springtime
'Neath the sunlight's magic spell
When the brooks begin to murmur
And the buds begin to swell;
And I felt my heart grow tender
All my nature ice bound long
Ran melting in a current
Of happy smile and song.

Her breath was like a zephyr
That wakes the flowers to life;
Her self and ways so clever
Were as banishment to strife.
Never far off skies were bluer
Than the soft blue of her eyes;
O, I miss her in the city
And my heart with hunger cries.

Her hair is wavy golden
And crowns a common face,
Unschool'd, and yet she charms me,
With her simple country grace.
Few, if any sweeter, fairer,
Than this sprite I sing, I know,
In her heart is nature's sunshine
On her cheeks the roses blow.

REAL FEASTS

How far between are life's real feasts
And how few are the guests seated there;
The mass, like Lazarus feed on crumbs
That fall from tables rare.

When but for a stomach a feast is spread
The human menagerie only is fed,
If garnished with gossip and vulgar jests
His majesty Satan, presides main guest.

But if love is spread, a feast for the heart
And brains be served as a proper part
Then the soul of man will assert its reign
And guests will a healthier growth attain.

THOUGHT HAS COLOR

The eye is a tell-tale creature,
That ever betrays the heart
With sudden, knowing expression,
Or surprised defiant start.
It is dull with dull ideas,
With beautiful thoughts it is bright.

So I take it thought has color
And gives to the eye it's light.
In lover, prophet and hero
The eye sheds a beautiful light—
Glorifies aim and purpose,
As stars the sky at night.

THE COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION, 1893

Great thinkers have thought
Great toilers have wrought
And the wealth of the world
To Chicago is brought.

Bid the people all shout
Bells and cannon peal out
Let the press of the world
Tell the wonders about.

Let the nations all come
Give them welcome and room
Peace tents on the earth
Good will is in bloom.
One sky covers all
This planet so small;
Each nation claims part
Yet the earth is one ball.

Man's origin is one,
The same blood doth run
In the veins of all people
That dwell 'neath the sun.
Welcome North, South, West, East
To this conquest of peace
All the centuries robbed
To prepare man a feast.

Earth hath done her best
Robbed heart and reaped breast;
All the wonders of nature
Obey man's behest.
Man has triumphed o'er war—
Faith's glorious car
In the orbit of love
Rolls on like a star.

Envy's dying—hate is dead,
Hope lives—mind is ahead,
And the genius of progress
At last is exalted.
Let art glorify canvas

Science clarify darkness
And genius her inventions
Create in completeness.

Learn creations vast plan
All things made for man;
To honor God's purpose
Let us do what we can.
Show the best things of earth
That have served man from birth
To grow a great heart
And a soul full of worth.

Here each nation's best thought
Stamped on what she has wrought
Shows the ideal life
After which she has sought.
From the centuries past
Set best manhood apart
Worth is greatness of soul
And sweetness of heart.

Let achievements combined
Viewed by all human kind
Price the best growth of man
Above all that we find.
True or not, we are told
By a story of old
Of an Island of Peace
In some sea of the east
Where love made her home
Where strife had no place
Earth should be such an isle
In the ocean of space.

THE UPAS OF SORROW

Don't make your heart a dumping ground,
For the sorrows of the race,
It will turn your head to water,
And tears will stain your face.

Don't wreck your life, I beg you,
With the troubles of your friends,
It is never wise to borrow
What the whole world gladly lends.

FRIENDS OF OUR YOUTH

When the heart is hungry and lonely
How we long for some one to love;
For some one to love us, tho only
An hour we the joy might prove.

When shadows of evening are 'round us
And daylight has faded away;
Sweet Vesper, bright stars above us
Remind us of trysts in life's May.

The friends of youth quickly perish;
How we miss them, fall into decay—
It is wiser new friends to cherish;
Years, cares, should not drive them away.

Hearts sharing friendship keep sweeter,
Face, eye, hold the light better too;
Friends sweeten old age and bad weather,
Love to life is both sunshine and dew.

THE OLD MASTERS

Had Homer a teacher?
Who graded the rule
That measured the lines
For the earliest school?

Of the choruses grand
Which Sophocles planned,
Who taught him both
Sweetness and power to command?

Did Job write that book
And give it his name?
The epic's immortal
Despite whence it came.

Full fledged at the birth
They as poets steps forth
Communed with all spirits
God's Prophets on Earth.

THE MIGHT OF RIGHT

Christian, Heathen, Pagan, Jew,
What are Adam's sons to you?
Note their number as they pass
Man and woman, boy and lass,
White and yellow, black and tan,
Grouped in nations, sub'ed in clan;
Envious, spoiling for a fight
Each maintaining he is right.

Braggarts all in praise of peace,
Waging wars that never cease.
Honey tongued, condemning strife,
Cruel, heartless, wasting life.

Christian Standard, "Priceless Souls."
Idol, heathen worth controls.
Pagan, mongrel, mighty crew,
Breeding sect imperious Jew.

Sift this medley if you can,
Tell me, what is man to man?
Some ideal of the brain
Is the goal each would attain.
Oft we honor man with praise
For achievement, length of days,
Goodness, wisdom, heart or brain,
Undersized, or noble strain.

Food for armies are the millions,
Slaves of toil, the common mass,
Office preys upon civilians
Trusts and creed; feed class on class;
Twofold learning helps and harms us,
Books and press are in the van
Food and drugs and thought alarm us,
Tell the true from false—who can?

Giant is the effort, progress
For material wealth and gain;
Fraud in trade and speech of Congress
Mark the speculator's vein.
Hopes are crushed and spirits broken
By the Juggernaut of wrong.
Helpless hosts in ranks unbroken,
Piteous wail and feeble song.

History is barren, few exceptions
Are the names on honor's rolls,
The great loss and waste of nations,
Dwarfs beside the waste of souls.
Yet, the call to duty nerves us

Earnest doing what we can.
Love of right shall solve life's problem,
And control the worth of man.

A MISSIONARY

May the blue sky now bending above you
With auroras forever be bright;
May the angels sent earthward to guard you
Make your trials and sorrows all light.
Be your life path a highway of flowers
Winding through the grand temple of spring
Be your memory a rich regent ever,
Bannered hosts of bright thoughts to bring.

May none of your joys prove fleeting
Like flowers by roving winds torn;
May no night-cloud of sorrow foregather
But your life be one twilight of morn.
To struggle for life each is fated
Here our lives to oblivion tend
Live then to do good as you journey
And life will crown death in the end.

In the flowery land of the Indies
By Ganges, by Indus or Bay
May souls leave their idols and follow
The Christ, you pointing the way.
And at last in a far away future
In a land that is fairer than day
To harps sing the songs you taught them
Praise God, swell the grand roundelay.

AS YOU WILL

A harp there is in every bosom
Wrought with finest skill,
Tuned to love or fiercest passion

At the player's will.

Wide as life and high as heaven
Its first strains were heard
God and Angels bow to listen
When its chords are stirred.

It was keyed to purest measures
By the Master's skill
But the serpent spoiled the tuning,
And the player's will.

Since if heaven bends to listen,
To the player's skill,
Or evil only stirs with gladness
The player now must will.

Tune again this harp heroic,
To the songs above;
Let each player ill foregoing,
Will its power to love.

SPRING VIOLETS

Over the hill and its shelving side
Are scattered the violets far and wide;
They are purple, blue
And of every hue,
Maiden a wreath I will twine for you.

A wreath I will twine to deck thy hair—
No king has jewels half so rare
As violets blue
Fresh bathed in dew;
Maiden a wreath I will twine for you.

Like hope they come at the sun's first beam
Braving wind and tempest's gleam;

And many a sigh
When the storms go by
Is sent to the bank where violets lie.

Full many a daisy over the lea
Turns its bright face O, Sun to thee,
But the daisy tints
Of a milky hue
Will not compare with the violet's blue.

For the chemist sun in his own way
With a Master's skill in beauty so gay
Has painted them blue
And of every hue
A lesson of meekness for me and you.

Ere verdure has started or spring begun
Thou bloomest in beauty, child of the sun
Thou art up from the sod
When spring starts abroad
And meekly blushing trusting in God.

I will trace by the breezes roving by
The scented banks where violets lie
And will cull the blue
And white ones too
As a crown of love sweet maid for you.

I will twine a wreath of violets fair
They are mete alone to deck thy hair
And if beauty to beauty
Can add a glow
'Tis the fittest crown love can bestow.

HEART POWER

The purple glow fades from the eternal vault
The crimson morning in the west goes out
The flight of time, the bowl of friendship breaks
The silver cord is ever being loosed—
Even so.

Will memory's harp e'er cease to play
To echoes from the past?
Tho in grand ruin by a myriad strains,
Or would we from the canvas of the eternal void
Blot out the shadows limned forever there.
Ah, no, no!

Does not warm sunshine paint its bow on clouds
In desert waste is not the flower still sweet?
May not the dying Christian smile at death
And bathed in tears the cheek with beauty glow?
O, yes, yes!

But only feeling gushing from the heart
Can melt the icebergs of this frozen world
And play in grandeur on its snow crowned Alps,
Enchain its millions with a magic spell,
Who gaze in rapture and in wonder die.
Aye, Aye.

THE SUN'S WAY

As watching one sweet summer's eve
The sun going down in the west
Revealing his curtains fold upon fold
More kingly than wrapped any monarch of old
When at night of his realm taking leave
'Midst his splendors retiring to rest.

How fitting the close seemed to be

In view of the good done on earth
His each flower that blooms in its place
His each pulse beat and color in space
He the author of motion and grace
God gives him the couch that we see
Gives each throne according to worth.

I turned with regret from the scene
While its lessons fell deep in my heart
I questioned, are man's days in vain?
What smile has he got for his gain,
What price for the better self slain?
Is his end but a tent 'neath the green,
Can'st answer me science and art?

All nature in silence stood round
While the schools offered logic in vain,
Till en rapport I seemed with all good
And my heart whispered "Take the sun's road!
Cheer man, help him carry his load;
Lift his eyes above toiling and pain
To the heights where wisdom is found."

A CHILD OF POVERTY

Shrieking mournfully
Thru the wold
The midnight wind
Is blowing cold.
Crouched by the embers
In pitying plight
A child of want
Is dying to-night.

Grim grow the shadows
The faint light expires
Death's tick in the wall

Her spirit retires.
A young life is ended,
Closed like the day,
The angel that brought it
Bears it away.

Strange were the fires
That gleamed in the eye
Of poverty's child
Not fearing to die.
Life went out in silence
The heart grew cold
Poor, friendless, deserted,
The story is told.

Dreary and somber
Life's last shadows fall
Lone death, dark lethe
Reigns over all.
Misery unnoted
Her grief none to tell
But the smile on her lips
Said "I'm well, I am well."

A NORTHERN MADRIGAL

The storms linger yet in the north
From ice lake and river is free
Then come to this beautiful beach
And enjoy the autumn with me.

By the banks of this river we'll stray
The Detroit that flows toward the sun
For mellow October is dreamy, is grand
And the short fervid summer is done.

Fresh winds from the forests are blowing

Filling sails that whiten the bay
And anthems of love float around me
Distant wave songs of Erie at play.

Here hamlets and farms stretch around me
Breathing songs of the life every day
And the fragrance of doing one's duty
Is born in on the heart at decay.

We have wasted spring time and summer
Midst the vapor of fancies and dreams;
Here the real now proffers its glory,
Life is in the main what it seems.

Wrap the past in the shroud of its fancies,
Seize the moment, the present today,
Fling all else to the river's free current
Let us live for this life while we may.

Let us live for a purpose, and serve it
A purpose that frowns at decay;
Midst the rugged and strong life is earnest,
And duty reigns king of each day.

THE AUTUMN CARNIVAL

God laid His hand upon the sun
Southward its light and warmth were drawn.
The maples flamed on every side
Oaks, royal colors wore with pride.
While beech, birch, ash—each common tree
And crowned bush stood reverently
Waiting the change that autumn brings
When birds fly south on hurrying wings.

Chill grew the air, the flowers died,
In pain the woods stood glorified.

Frost smote the earth with biting breath
Anon, the landscape swooned in death.
O, nature rich in toil and song,
Art's carnivals to thee belong
This annual lesson color blest;
When toil is done—how sweet is rest—
To rest in hope without a fear
Makes toil delightful every year.

Warriors with all their marches done,
Last battle fought—last victory won,
Die smiling, happy—heroes, braves!
Enough for them—their flag still waves.
So warrior nature, each year's run
To cheer her toilers—harvest done—
Paints every leaf a gonfalon;
Nor asks for thirty, sixty fold or more—
Knowing field and forest did their best,
The earth is glad, and holds her color feast.

MY LIBRARY

Here is the wealth of all the ages,
Owned by me;
Mines of heart and realms of spirit
Stretches vast of worth and merit
Wit and wisdom's golden ledges
Mine in fee.

Here with master minds I wander
Company we,
Paths of thought are blazed before me
Mind's domain is free;
Honored dead ye live, I ponder
Thoughtfully.

Here the ages backward rolling
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Show to me
All earth's children how they perished
Art and science how they flourished
All times doing and undoing
Wondrously.

Though the thinker die and perish
Thought will live
Traced on bark, cut in marble matters naught
Truth immortal through the ages crumbles not;
Remote exhumed from deepest rubbish
Life 'twill give.

O, ye bound and lettered sages
Facing me
Mummied silent in your places
Witnesses from all the races
Of the minds immortal graces
Blest are ye.

THE ST. LAWRENCE

O, I see it yet in the fadeless past
The river that flows to the sea
As it bathes the feet of the rolling hills
Gathering strength from lakes, rivers and rills
What thoughts of vastness my being fills,
As I think of the aeons of ages fled,
Of the labor of carving a river's bed,
Of thy tribute born to the sea.

A sky of summer hangs over the scene,
And my youth comes back to me,
As I pass on thy banks old cities, and towns,
Forts, where the god of battle still frowns;
And note the civilization that crowns
The near and far, the now and then,
I bless again, the frontier men

Whose blood, has made all free.

Almighty the hand that broadcast sowed
Those emerald isles in thee;
And wrapped with air that thrills like wine
The hills, and valleys, each sylvan shrine
That mirrors the beauty, those waves of thine
Give back, as again our crowded boat,
With reeling excitement thy rapids shoot
And hurry us on toward the sea.

The night of the east, and moon of the west,
Like the shores of the ages meet here;
Betwixt them thou flowest, O river of might
Skirting Europe and France with liquid delight,
Yet giving thy strength to the west in thy flight;
Mighty home where the ships of the world may rest,
Earth's commerce ride on thy tide-troubled breast
The tramp of the nations sounds near.

A spell of enchantment hangs over the scene
As the present illumines the past;
Strange braves and legends pass before me
Bold heroes with Wolf at their head now I see
And tides of the past like tides of the sea
Are backing my thoughts, like that current of thine
And again I stand, in the focus of time
O beautiful river, 'till into my soul
Those glories of thine have passed.

MY WILL

A smile for my friends,
A kiss for my love,
A prayer to the Lord
Then a swift flight above
Is the will of my soul,
When earth life shall end.

Faith, Hope, know the path;
I shall live over there
In the city of life
Jesus went to prepare;
There happy to live,
With friends gone before.

My words and my deeds!
How perplexing the thought!
Have I done what I should?
Have I said what I ought?
I must leave them behind
To the judgment of earth;
May that judgment be kind,
Nay according to worth!
I must leave all behind.

INTERVIEWED AT EIGHTY

The old man's steps were short and slow
In the crowded thoroughfare—
I eagerly watched his face bent low
A record of thought and care.
I drew him aside from the hurrying street
To a seat in the park where lovers meet
There, I tapped his current of life and grief,
And this is the story, he told in brief.

"In youth when Eros had kissed my heart
And life with promise was filled
I said I will set my best apart
To my race my powers I willed
I sought on the cheek of my fellow man
To lighten the touch of care;
With the troubles of life I early began
As a private, to wage warfare;
I gave my money to help the poor,
I coined my heart into song;

When empty neglect prevailed.
I wove the best of my brain in prose
To help earth's weary along.

"I was favored and petted as long as I gave,
Ere means and powers all failed;
The world soon reaped my fenceless fields
For fifty years I tugged at the chains
That hold mankind in thrall;
An occasional smile I got for my pains—
Have I failed? No, not in all;
There is comfort my friend at eventide
For those who have done their best;
And the blessings of God are on the man
Who waits on His behest.

"True, I am grieving for hands I clasped,
For the red lips, mine have kissed;
Each step of life, each moment elapsed,
Is stamped with something missed.
In Yamoyden's Hall are all my friends—
This world is a storm swept place.
I am nearing the end, hope bright cheer lends
And points to the islands of peace.

"The years have reaped the fields of my heart;
The stubbles are white with snow;
Yet the sun to my soul, doth heat impart
This winter of life must go!
Now, I have no poems to cheer the throng,
And my hands are empty of wealth,
The senses fail, when the journey's long;
I am tottering on toward health;
Here little's accomplished of aught we plan
But the end is well, if we work for man."

A SPOILED LIFE

I see in your face no beauty
The light of your eye is dull
Your step has lost its vigor
Your heart with sorrow is full.

Yes, yes the old, old story
Of love, temptation, sin;
The path of ruin you entered,
And since have walked therein.

Pride promised to make you happy
You reasoned, "I must be free!
It is narrow to only do the right,
I am broad, no limits for me!"

From the narrow path you were jostled
Or willingly stepped aside
You simply followed your own sweet will
Chose desire and nature for guide.

And now with your beauty faded
And your heart with ashes filled
A waste world lies before you
To never more be tilled.

Wrong ever grows its harvests
Of thistles, weeds and thorn,
The pleasure sought with downward look
Of an earth accursed is born.

Life's choicest things grow slowly
By resisting storm and blight;
Only rods of faith grow quickly
Bud, bloom, and fruit in a night.

The pleasures of earth fade swiftly
And in sorrow yield no delight
But the lamp of love in the human heart
Shines through the face in the night.

In the dawn of life your beauty
Was passing fair no doubt
But the face of age is gruesome
When the light in the heart goes out.

MOODS OF THE HEART

(The heart is greatly disquieted until it finds God
Marcus Aurelius)

The moods of the heart are many
As the stars that swing in space
They come and go like shadows
Of thought, on an infant's face.

Like the earth aglow with sunlight
Is the heart aglow with love
But shadows of hate obscure it
As clouds, the moon above.

When the spirit of grace is in it
In Heaven we seem to dwell
But when evil passions rule it
We are scarce outside of hell.

It is kin to all of nature;
Has countless hates and loves
Has passions like hawks and vultures
Emotions like larks and doves.

In its blood red fount are mirrored
Volitions of soul and brain,

It is Eden before temptation
And then it's the house of Cain.

'Tis the native lair of the coward
Where cruelties lurk and hide;
Anon, it's the altar of worship
Where hope and faith abide.

As a ball in the hands of players
Is man to time and place;
The moods of the heart are pictures
Of change, in the fields of space.

And yet true to its lode star,
As the needle to the pole;
Thru variance, dip, disturbance,
Love ever regains control.

O garden God-leased, who keeps thee
For true love set apart,
Will never grow weeds of passion
Nor die with an ache in the heart.

WHAT IS CHARACTER?

Not a something cut in marble
Not a thing of brass or clay
But a live result of action
That groweth day by day.
Like raiment fine in fashion
Or untidy clothes one wears
Is the essence of one's action
The character one bears.
Man's reputation only
Is the thing men praise or hiss
But his character is truly
And really what he is.

SONGS IN THE NIGHT

In the sensuous air of the south
The nightingale sings in the night
And its song is impassioned or low
According as stars give their light.

Ere rain beat or tempest is heard,
Thy notes seem troubled and sad
Then cease till the storm is past
When moon and stars make them glad.

Is it true then, that story of old,
That a slain lover lives in your breast,
That you sing to a grief laden throng
Whose sorrow will not let them rest?

Do the great undertones of the world
Break like waves on your heart in the night,
Art silent because of the wrong
Too plainly revealed by daylight?

Does the Lord's Angel come as of old
To his saints in the night from on high?
Does your heart overflow with his song?
Does the light of his love glad your eye?

Even so in the hush of the night
His peace floweth into the soul
Even so sang His saints in the night
Spurning stripes and prison control.

O songs of life, ye are sweet,
Doubly sweet in the silence of night;
When the toils of the day are complete
Then songs of the soul take flight.

HOMES AND PRISONS

The prisons of earth are many,
The homes of the world are few,
What to me is a peaceful eden
Is a desert waste to you.

I have a bent for labor
You have a genius for rest,
Things that are deepest stamped on me,
On you were lightly pressed.

One loves a vine thatched cottage,
Another a palace would have
The one exalts the master,
The other comforts the slave.

Some move ever so quickly
While others are never in haste
And so through the roll of virtues
Persons differ in will and taste.

If the artist, the sculptor or poet
With heart refined and chaste,
Consorts with the maid of all work,
There sentiment runs to waste.

Tho the lifting power of marriage
Is great beyond control
It only acts when man and wife
Live level, soul with soul.

ST. CLAIR FLATS

I ask myself, is it real?
As I scan the Flats so wide
And my thoughts drift hither, thither

Like the vessels on the tide;
For the summer's hazy stillness
Mellows everything I see
And dreamy distant pictures
Form and vanish endlessly
And the oozy wash of waters
As they waste the sandy shore
Are a protest 'gainst the island
And its builders evermore.

Around float gauzy insects
Above fly duck and crane—
Where flag, wild rice and willows
Mark the shallow lines with green.
While below the crystal surface
On sand or mossy floor;
Dwells a brotherhood of fishes
Our Waltons all adore.
I seldom care to wet a line
My hunting skill is poor,
But here's the place to bathe and dine
And dip the dripping oar.

Real pleasure here may widely range
With little work for feet—
For steam and sail and oar and tide
With every mood compete.
Beneath the landing roof I sit
And smoke and look and dream;
Question the wherefore and the why
Of every changing scene.
Here too in every stage of growth
I read the books of life
Of young, of old, of middle aged
Child, lover, husband, wife.

At work are some on title page,
While others near the close;
Some write of hope, ambition, love,

Some sighing, write but woes.
So, day by day, the pages fill,
Light up or shade the face—
Upon the soul, the evil thought
As well as good, leaves trace;
And as about the world we go
However act our part—
The face, the eye, the outward self,
Reveals the inward heart.

We are unconscious artists all,
In business, on parade,
We feed on law, by love and hate,
By thought and act are made.
All labeled, stamped, and marked
Are we by birth, profession, trade.
So, as the loungers come and go,
And as each plays his part;
I note the level of men's lives
Are not so far apart.

For bounded by the realm of want
Is flesh and spirit too
We take the present doubtingly
The dim unknown pursue.
Daily we question those we meet,
Ask what they know, what's new?
Thus ever gain thru other eyes,
Of life a wider view,
Thankful am I for idle days,
And places of resort;
For real life displays itself,
Most candidly in sport.

AN HELP MEET

There's a smile in every word
That her rosy lips caress—
The perfect style of June
In her manner and her dress.

And when to me she writes,
Because we are apart
Every sentence is a path
To her busy brain and heart.

There is purpose in her life
Fruiting rich as autumn days
She a woman, she a wife,
She a queen in all her ways!

Not a butterfly of fashion—
Just a woman, flesh and blood,
Content to be while living,
True, beautiful, and good.

KEEPING WATCH

Watchers thru the night so lonely,
Is it chill and dark?
Does the starlight shimmer coldly
Does the earth look stark?
Watcher why not sleep in comfort,
Why your vigils here?
Does the sob for dead, for dying
Pierce and rend your ear?

Lying on the young earth lonely
In the silent night
Jacob saw the heavens open
Bathed his soul in light.
And his eyes were lifted upward,
Looked toward the day—
Thence he journeyed, sweetly trusting,
When the dawn grew gray.

When the lights of earth burn dimmest
To the eyes of flesh
Then the lights beyond glow brightest

To the eyes of faith.
Maiden, why so flushed and restless,
Is the waiting long?
It is hard to read life's signals
Surges so the throng.

Young man, why so impatient,
Why not bide your time?
In the chase your strength is wasted;
Tarry in your prime.
Tired pilgrim stepping feebly,
On, the way is short
Bravely seaman face the tempest,
Make the homing port.

Why in yonder hovel watcher
Burns the lamp so late?
Death is calling one too tired
For the dawn to wait.
Aged watcher life's behind thee
Soon must close the fight;
Look! behold the golden pathway
For the soul's near flight.

Stay thy haste, tho' time is speeding;
Waste no present boon;
Give your heart to love, and joy,
Aches may fill it soon.
Rest, the night will soon be over
Dawn is drawing near,
To live in the eternal yonder
Go the dead from here.

ENFORCED IDLENESS

(The curse of the poor is his poverty)

I have read it over and over again—
"The Cotter's Saturday Night."
And think the charm of that noble life
Was the something always in sight.
It was little I know save hardest toil
But that and the something more
That daily graced his simple board
And kept the wolf from the door.
Save grace and toil supplies were scant
Yet each day brought enough for daily want.

I too have bairns and a loving wife
But our lot is worse than the Cotter's life
For we no acres or cottage own
And the landlord's rule is—"rent cash down."
Rent may be low, but poor and small
Is the house for which we can pay at all.
Tho bairns and wife and I are willing,
There are times when we can't earn a shilling.
When times are bad or profits small
Short time, low wages or nothing at all.

When work is scarce days go by
With naught in sight for life's supply.
We pray and trust but doubt comes too
I guess, because we have nothing to do.
Yet day by day with patient tread
We seek a chance to earn our bread.
At every door where we apply
No work today, is the curt reply.
The shop is closed, The mill's shut down
Work yields no profit, dead is the town.

Employers will not pay for skill
That yields no shekels for the till.
So brains and hands oft idly wait
Till "Corners" swell the market rate.
Till then bairns, wife and I must eat.
Yet wherewith all must we be fed,
And wherewith all shall be clad
Till profits crest the market wave?
For muscle's all the stock we have.

We all work hard when times are good
For daily toil brings daily food.
Beside we are glad arrears to meet
Tho nothing lessens cost of meat.
When times are very flush at best
We are oft laid off, but not for rest.
Laid off, because the boss that day
Concludes to labor will not pay.
Or for repairs there's urgent need,
To run at cost is not his creed.
Even steady jobs are not inclined
To help the poor man raise the wind.

All strikes and lockouts are a curse
To men of muscle with no purse.
St. Crispin Clan and Labor guild
On poor men's backs their burdens build.
They strike at Capital not at us,
But work and pay stop thru the muss.
So want and woe anew set in
When work to right our wrongs begin;
With other ills to fight beside
The poor is doomed to the under side.

It is all a boast from first to last
Earth hath no place uncursed by caste.
The toiler ranks not with the best
When dailies blow for the best drest.

For what can penury pay or spend
For dress or schooling or such like end?
But in this age of science and art
All are not dummies who don't take part.
Life's bitterest law he names, who says;
"The poor have always such poor ways."

True of civilization, the darlings
Are the beautiful great and strong.
True the rich the many friended
To "Our Set" do not belong.
But the valleys are full of souls of will
Who toil like the giant chained in the mill.
Drudge on they must till might in short
Shall hurl the burdens off labor in sport.
The burdens that grow with the price of land
And society's price for a place to stand.

Until profits be shared by labor and wealth
There'll be waste of muscle, waste of health;
There'll be aches in stomach as well as heart
And limbs with exposure will ache and hurt.
Until gold and silver and acres of clod
In the balance weigh less than a child of God.
Man must suffer and wait, must toil and endure
Until Nazareth's Carpenter comes again.
Comes to the earth to rule and reign
When justice, good will, shall be restored,
And Mammon no more enthroned earth's Lord.

RESURRECTION

I saw the curtains of the night divide
And on a chill bleak world the morning smiled.
Stern winter had so long 'gainst life decried,
That nature no more flag of truce unfurled—
Slain was her hardiest child.
Entranced I looked, the distant woods

Began to breathe and wrap themselves
In mists of greenish haze.
Grim winter hid away his bitter moods
And soft green lances as if borne by elves
Marched down earth's sunny ways.

Life heard the call of far off star and sun
And vegetation burst her sleeping tomb
And sent her yeanelings out to meet the spring.
The burial days of sleep their round had run
And resurrection's joyous time had come
And rank on rank new life began to spring.
Gazing, I saw the fields of billowy mounds
'Neath which dead generations sleeping lay
At rest from battling with storms of time.
The night of death like nature ends its round—
Comes spring to them some resurrection day?
For them life's reveille shall sound its call.

I felt this veil of flesh unwind its folds
My vision lengthened 'bove the waste of years
My spirit moving saw the eternal plan;
One purpose vast each world controlled.
Nature, spirit, the extremes, no room for fears,
Conviction came as when fixed facts we scan.
Each glance the omnific eye sent forth a dawn
To roll and break upon this netherworld,
And mark the flight of time.

'The awakening comes, far, far I saw
Ending the procession of the years
The promise of an earth restored;
Circled by harps and songs that wait a jubilee.
Expectant spirits waiting for the trumpet sound
Are crowding toward the crowning act
When earth shall own her King.
The sleep of death shall end
The dead shall live
And earth obey her lord.

It is promised by the Word that never fails;
Desired by the day spring from on high.
Even now the morning star lights up the dawn;
Earth's troubled night is scarcely half asleep
Already eyes of faith are waking up
The bride, expectant of her coming spouse,
In pure desire is praying "haste the day."
And hungry hearts long for departed loves
Eyes longing look to see an absent face.
Hard empty palms are hot to clasp a friend.

God's stream of purpose
Swelled by faith and love
Is quickened in its flow
And waters all the fields of faith and hope
Prayer and good will to man.
This age 'bove others is most rich in faith
Feeds on fruition of diviner hope
Pants with desire that nears enjoyment
And grows its wisdom from the word of God.
The right grows more aggressive;
Idolatry, ignorance and doubt are on the run.

Science once pagan is converted now!
Says, "Mind and spirit never taste of death."
Says, "Nature is but waste of thought
Swept into space to aggregate in change"
Says, "Matter has no life is but a sea of death
Stirred by great waves of thought
That hurl it into ever varying forms of change;
With ever changing laws that come and go."
Twixt good and evil still the fight is on
The good grows stronger, sin but more desperate.
The field is freer now, of din and smoke,
And brighter are the faces of the brave.
The brave who worship God by helping man.

The hosts that love the right, have cheerful grown,
And march to quicker time.

Slow, solemn strains, have given place
To stirring, sweet, triumphant songs
Among the sons of faith.
The hearts that hold no pity for the poor
Are caged alone in savage breasts
Where sacrifice is taming them by power of love.
Few are earth's slaves save those of drink
And lust, and they in covert worship self,
Fearing the strength of those who seek their good.

The good renew their strength by deeds of love.
O, heralds of the day, come quick, ride fast!
And drive all loitering shadows from the earth.
Enthroned the conquest of eternal right
And usher in the dawn of time's supernal light—
The golden age of justice and of peace
The crowning age of sympathy and love
The universal brotherhood of man
The reign of spirits reconciled to God.

SOME SHADOWS

Some shadows must fall on every home;
Into each heart some sorrow must come,
Until good hurls evil off the earth
Sobs and weeping will mingle with mirth.
For the young may fail
The old must die
And change wring tears
From every eye.

While earth thru light and dark swings round
Will the heart with aches and joys abound.
The weak must cringe while the strong hold rule;
The strife is ceaseless 'twixt sharper and fool.
For mirth won't last
Even smiles fade out;
No telling the fate
Of king or lout.

THE WORLD SUITS ME

When life was young
And my pulse beat strong
And paths of pleasure
Seemed endlessly long
I said this world suits me.

I said its dawns are founts to my soul
Its purple sunsets glory's own goal
This grand old world suits me.

So I gave loose rein
To fancies and dreams,
Noted earth's Edens
And cool winding streams—
Took in the length of
The star's soft gleams
And said this world suits me.

I looked on the fields of human life;
I looked on the centers of human strife,
And saw great victors with honors rife;
Fame noisily gushing from drum and fife
And said this world suits me.

But age I protest improves the sight
And shows the truth in a truer light
For much I thought, I saw clearly in youth
Is full of flaws and wanting in truth;
To eyes that never were washed in tears
Much that is faulty as perfect appears.

My day of endeavor is nearing its night
I welcome its coming, the end of the fight;
For much that I purposed to do with my might
Has failed, wrong mixed with the right;
Many best efforts have suffered from blight.

THE LOST ART

Many men know Hebrew, Greek,
Who knows what tongue the songbirds speak?
Who knows the lore of herd or flock?
Who can the insect mind unlock?
Adam called to each its name
As by him all earth's creatures came.
Sore wearied by that living host
Confused, he nature's language lost.
Since then tho man has done his best
To learn brute tongue; we must confess
Our meager knowledge is a guess
'Bout chirp of bird and bray of ass.
Since then, this world so full of life
Has but two voices, song and strife,
Which science swears beyond a doubt
Means stomach full, or food all out.

Still there are souls the songbird charms
Whose natures shrink from daintiest worms.
Even the mosquito pipes his strain
For more than feel its lancet's pain,
The smallest life on earthy ball
Notes nature's changes one and all.
The wild fowl with its little brain
Knows more of sky and sea and plain
Than man, with all his boasted pride;
Tho claimed by some to beasts allied.
The bee, the beaver, wiser are
'Bout storm and shine and nature far
Than weather prophets, by the score,
With all their daily printed lore.

To Adam was dominion given
To lord it over all the living
But when he lost his self control
Man lost his grip on nature's soul;

And once proud rulers of this sphere
Sank to the depths of doubt and fear.
To save man's hope from its white shroud
God set his bow upon the cloud
And promise gave when men were pale
"Seed-time and harvest shall not fail."
What nature writes is not now clear
Although she prints a book each year.
With her man's deep in love indeed,
Yet few the pages he can read.
It may be nature, heartless, smart
Has kind o' jilted her sweetheart.

THE HISTORY OF CRIME

Sin against each other,
And then drift apart,
Is a plain law of crime
Written deep on the heart.
In anger Cain shed Abel's blood,
Then accursed, fled thence
To the East, Land of Nod;
Where as fugitive he nursed
His low sullen thoughts
And for harvests of evil
Devised cruel plots.

Strong cities he built him
And ruled over men
God's free earth divided
He sold out for gain.
With countenance fallen
He looked but for spoil,
And no worth saw in man,
Save the worth of his toil.
This father of robbers
Had murdered his man
Which made him the chieftain
Of earth's evil clan.

Who rebels against God,
He rebels against man.

As in the beginning
So down thru all time,
The faithless, the doubting
Have fattened on crime.
Even as Cain devised cities
And measures and weights,
Have his sons devised pleasures,
And used them for baits,
To catch the unwary,
To injure the good;
Spread nets and dug pits
On the land, on the flood.

But curst of his mother,
And curst of his God—
'Bove the cattle and earth,
Was this robber of Nod,
Who traveled the wrong,
When he knew the right road;
Offered first, fruits and flowers
Then, Abel's warm blood.
He had batten'd on evil
Had fed upon doubt
Had tortured his reason
Till faith had gone out.
And at last as it must be
When a stranger to right
His Brother's acceptance
Enraged him to fight.

From its Source ever widening
Thru the ages of time,
Rolls down to the present,
That current of crime;
Diverse are its feeders
As whims of the mind.

With main current deep
As all evil combined.
Each doubt in the Father
Bred doubt in the Son;
So broadened crimes current
The farther it run.

Cain's lusts in his children
Are as plain when they're born
As the white tents of Jabal;
As Jubal's wild horn.
Even current today
Do bold bad men pass
As in lands east of Eden
Did Anak's own brass.
A spawn breeding lot
Were these minions of evil
True chips of the old block
Of Cain the uncivil.

It was one against one
When the trouble began
It has raged till the battle
Is man against man.
Disobedience came first,
Then murder, then lust,
Crime's procession still lengthens,
Still trails thru the dust.
Doubt harbored by one
Has tainted all flesh
Till this life's a disease.
I repeat it I know it!
(You may laugh if you please)
Tho I state not the cause;
This life's a disease.
Centrifugal evil
Expulsively tends

To quicken migration
To earth's farthest ends.
Like the down on the thistle
Fear wings us for flight!
Conscience only gives strength,
When we follow the right.

TEMPTATIONS

Our passions are oft athirst
And reckless as hungry bears
Temptations before us halt
To entice with glittering wares.
Like rivers our veins are filled
With the pour of a sudden lust
When appetites of the body reign
They drag the soul in the dust.

When reason the monarch of life
By her subjects is once deposed
And the fleshly appetites rebel
The soul some charm must lose,
For forever lying in wait
Are desires of wondrous length—
Some ripe Delilah with silent shears
To cut away our strength.

It was so with the fathers of old
It is so with the present day
When from purpose, strength is shorn,
The flesh will have its way.
Then, in blindness the fallen must grind
In the tyrant's heavy mill;
Each Sampson fallen becomes a slave,
The sport of his victor's will.

A RUINED FLOWER

I picked it up on the crowded street
Soiled and trampled and torn
A simple blossom a child of the sun
Its fragrance and beauty gone.
Tenderly praised when plucked, no doubt
Loved and fondly caressed
In the heat of affection its fragrance failed
Failed in the hand that pressed;
Then pitied mayhap, then tossed on the pave
To be trodden by careless feet.
From the crest of affection pure, sweet, thing
It sank to the dirt of the street.

Now grant me O, Muse the poet's eye
With keen perceptive thought
In this ruined rose to read aright
The larger lesson taught.
There are rare sweet blossoms of human kind
Reared and cultured with care
Young girls grown up in the homes of men
Pure as the flowers are.
Sure the ruined thing I found today
Is a type of woman when lusts betray.
Innocent things in our homes are they
Vestals for shrines of love

With graces of person charms of mind
Clinging, trusting, sweet,
With brows and faces pure and fair
Where honor and virtue meet.
The moment they are soiled by the hand of lust,
Blushes and smiles remove
Thence down to slums and midnight streets
They drift from home and love.
O, daughter of man thou art made of clay
The curse in thy body lives

It may slumber awhile 'neath blush and smile
But wantoned with, it deceives.

When sunned by lust its poison revives
And the demon of evil lives
Plucked in a moment of burning love,
Blackened and charred by its heat
Soon passion full gorged deserted, and then
Cast off by the good and great.
Betrayed by one, mayhap a true friend,
Who meant not the ruin wrought.
In both, blind passions their leashes slipped
To wanton and revel in shame
While honor and conscience the ruin beheld
And writhed in the scorching flame.

THE JUDGMENT

Consider nature,—she seems made up of the
savage and the tender; kind or cruel, as it chances;
men devise wars, punishments, asylums, homes.
The heart says to suffering, "Hope on".

Love is the sun of the soul shining on the here-
after.

Every page of human history
Handed down since time began
Tells how good and evil battled
In the heart of every man.
How right and wrong have triumphed
In the ages of the past,
How tribes and nations disappeared,
Before oppression's blast.

How the infant in the cradle
And the king upon the throne,
Were slain by those whom nature prized
For girth of chest and bone.
Across this backward waste of time

No human eye can see
That nature rights the injured ones,
Who bow to might's decree.

Some thinkers say, there is no hell!
It is plain as plain as can be
That every page of nature says
From chastening hands we are free!
Well, let us read this open book
Let thoughts of judgment stay,
And if we find her good and kind
Why then to nature pray.

Go ask the seer, ask Milton
And Satan you will find
Is the Satan of the ages
Not a phantom of the mind.
Evil is so abundant
In the good that here we find,
Says John Stewart Mill, of nature;
Her acts don't prove her kind.

Nature nurses motes in sunbeams,
Yet sows the world with death;
Her heart is rent with earthquakes,
And cyclones are her breath.
In the billows of the ocean
By their beams, she swings the stars.
Yet, this dancing ground of tempests
Is bestrewn with broken spars.

Is nature kind? she's cruel too;
No flesh but has its thorn;
The birth, the death are cruel foes
To everything that is born.
Is nature kind? she's cruel too,
Half smile half cloud and storm;

Earth's garments made by hands of love
By hands of hate are torn.

Is nature kind, vain boaster?
Pray show me if you can
Where mercy, justice, germinate,
Save in the heart of man.
And even there a feeble growth
The better virtues find
If the only guide be conscience
If the only guide be mind.

For the inmost heart bears witness
Of a judgment of a king
Who rewardeth good and evil
Whose right it is to reign.
O, how patiently they suffer
How patiently they wait
Whose wrongs seem never righted here
To pass the golden gate.

Shall the cruel, think you, boaster,
Whose number none can tell,
In that longed for land of justice
Escape the throes of hell?
It is the teaching of the scripture,
The longing of the heart
For time to come, when God shall put,
The wolves and lambs apart.

Here, the reign of law is cruel,
Its assizes fierce we dread;
It regardeth not the infant
Nor man with snowy head.
We behold, yet pant for justice
Tempered with love complete
Such grace and love as only grow
Around God's mercy seat.

THE STEAMER CHINA

(Lake Erie, 1883)

Dear Friends:

Take note on China boat,
Upon Lake Erie we are afloat;
No toil today; from care we are free
A large and joyous company.
From Cleveland forth, we follow the
Down streaming waters toward the sea.
Thru purple mists along we glide
By steam, out-stripping wind and tide.
To right the friendly shore lies near.
To north and west, some sails appear.

We gaze upon that line of blue
Where old is lost; and into view
Forever rises something new.
There watch each vessel rise and sink
And as we watch, these thoughts we think
Each vessel on some errand bent,
Built, manned, and guided with intent;
Looks something human, doomed to strife
Upon the restless waves of life.

To distant ports white sailed they go,
Some with the wind content to sail
While others fret against the gale.
Each with its freight of joy or woe
Doth onward sail, some fast, some slow.
Why are some doomed before they start
While others grandly enter port.
How close allied these craft we meet
To people on the road or street.

Men are like sailboats, such as we
Today see sail this inland sea.
The young clean built and white of sail,
The old bear marks of many a gale.

The strong securely ride the storm;
They perish first of feeblest form.
Some helpless sink in infancy
While others drift on hopelessly.
O, man o'erwhelmed in busy strife—
Take ship and learn the drift of life.

Yon little craft—a painted fop,
Her hold is small, she's light of top.
Propellers are our men of craft
They carry burdens fore and aft,
While lumber boats are men of trade
For use and service trusty made;
The masted schooners, are allied
To men we meet, on every side;
In port, at home, they're wintry things;
Away they are birds on happy wings.

Our worldly men are vessels large
Have every enterprise in charge;
But when they land to make report,
A tug must drag them into port.
Their worldly load is everything
That promised gold or joy to bring.
When—Give account! calls from afar
Think you they'll cross the harbor bar?
If no tug tempts that dreadful gale,
Henceforth, a shoreless sea they sail.
Mildew and storm mar whitest sails—
Cheeks lose their smiles when grief prevails;
Suffice to say, in boats we trace
A semblance of the human race.

THE WRECKER

(A Cornish Legend)

The wrecker sat in his cavern door
Silently watching the moaning sea
Noting the dip of the screaming gulls

Said "Stormy the night will be".
The white spray leaped from the sunken reefs
Like spirits into the air
The tide rolled landward, a mighty grief,
As of giants in despair.
He saw the petrel pluming for flight
The spectral vapor already in sight
And restlessly said, "it will storm tonight".
The sky drooped low o'er the moaning sea
As if daring the deep to fight
While the silent air (between the two)
Seemed trying to keep them quiet.

His restless eye read every sign
The storm king spreads abroad
In warning of the wrath to come
When tempests take the road.
It was old to the wrecker, oft before,
He had seen this preparation for war;
Had laughed in glee at his cavern door,
As he thought of the drift to come ashore.
For many a goodly ship had he
Lured on those sunken rocks
But never he thought of the drifting dead
As he landed barrel and box.
But today a strange unrest he feels
And shadows tug at his heart.
Strange spectres of evil the sea reveals
And his muscles twitch and start.

His past life seems to come again,
With its good and evil, its shine and rain
And his soul responds with an aching pain
That is new to him, that he cannot name.
Is it born within from the outward throes
Of a troubled world, or the inward ache
The soul must feel, when ruin hurled
From the ethical heights of the moral world?
However it be, nature at last had struck a key

To which must answer heart and brain,
As mercy answers cries of pain.
Strange influences on his senses fell
But why, or whence he could not tell;
Yet forced, he felt against his will,
Himself the victim of some spell,
He could not by his reason quell.

Why is a dog impelled to yield
His mournful howl at some bell's peal
Whose trembling sound floats in the air
While other curs quit not their lair;
Or why when luna's round and full
One bays at her so pitiful?
In some such way far vague and dim
The wrecker (something troubled him).
Inward he felt presentments roll—
Unknown emotions stir his soul
As if the future then flashed back
Results of some unacted act
He saw his past life quickly pass
Procession like as thru a glass;
Then felt his trembling heart stand still
And scalding mist his hot eyes fill.

"Must I then own the truth"—he cried,
"The teaching of the Crucified."
Each life that to this earth is hurled
Is tethered to another world,
And every man that lives in this
His brother's keeper therefore is.
The future challenged him indeed
To halt, consider every deed;
As if the simplest act we wis,
Beyond the now, sends influences.
He turned away from the deepening gloom,
But in his cavern found no room
For his unrest, with troubled brow

And faltering step he sought the sea,
Asking why, whence troubles be?
Nature with fear was deeply stirred
And all her throes seemed evil starred.

His every sense was pained with fear;
He felt some strangeness filled the air,
As if voices spoke, which he could not hear.
Intangible warnings assailed his ear.
Before him passed vision-like faces in pain
The will of another seemed ruling his brain;
A warning, if balefires be lit on the height
Trouble would come to the wrecker, that night.
He moved with ease, his senses worked well,
Around him weird forces were weaving a spell.
What influences these moving still as the wind
Enslaving with power the will and the mind.
Was it soul-flowing-vigor brooding o'er space
Announcing results ere the act taketh place?
Some thought-bearing ether the mass will not heed,
Rejecting the lesson earth's true prophets read.
Half broken in purpose he tried to explain
Why intangible warnings impinged on his brain.

His conscience now tender the warning said heed!
But reason cried, coward what is it you dread?
As a carrier pigeon tossed up circles round
'Till in sensuous ether a pathway is found.
So circled his reason, so wavered his will
Mid doubt and conviction 'till vanished the spell.
As after the battle, the stragglers come in,
He regains his excuses and justifies sin.
Food, clothing, life comforts he says, I must have,
They, my jetsam, my flotsam the gifts of the wave.
He reasoned, as men do in calling and trade
Is it evil if by it my living is made?
Almost persuaded he turned from the right
Almost persuaded he faced toward the night
Then doubt shot arrows of fear in his brain

His struggling conscience filled with pain.

By the lightning's glare, his face revealed
The fact, an evil choice, his sad fate sealed.
Black night dropped down, the darkness of death
His white locks stirred by storm-demon breath.
All nature trembled from far and from near
Sea, earth felt the wound of the storm's red spear.
To life on the earth the thunders above
Say a storm knows no mercy, quarter or love.
With body atremble, with feverish mind
He goes like a wolf to prey on his kind.
Stealthily steals to the headland height
And swiftly a balefire glows on the night.
There muses the wrecker feeding his fire—
The laborer is worthy of his hire.
How good (tho false) must seem the light
To sailors on the sea at night.

He knew results would different be
From what the pilots think or see.
But what of that, pretended friends
Oft kindle fires for selfish ends;
Win confidence for sake of prey
They hope to take some other day.
Deception, yes, claimed, justified,
Since man, wolf, monkey are allied.
The angry flashes went plowing the sea
Thru a night wild and dark as could be;
The live bolts seemed wrecking overhead
The sky—sea and earth bellowed with dread.
Mid hurricane blasts the storm held its breath
Like a beast of evil, low crouching for death.
Each blast blew fiercer than that gone before
As rolling in fury the sea lashed the shore.
Freely the wrecker heaped fuel that night
Uncaring to whom it proved a false light.

He felt the storm waning that fevered his brain,

So renewed his efforts to increase his gain.
A common practice when dangers abound
For men by false signals to lure one aground.
By the fireside glow 'mid circle of friends
Oft are lighted false tapers for base selfish ends.
Hark! thru the sea's seething tempest and storm,
A sound that transfixes the wrecker is born.
It is the call of distress mariners give—
Proclamation of cannon when ships cannot live;
Each minute the peal cuts tempest and night,
Like the wail of the lost in a losing fight.
Eyes strained in terror at last see the light
Revealing itself in that season of fright.
Tho kindled for evil, purpose unseen,
A promise of aid tho motive unclean.

Men are taught in this nether world dark
To look for the light, nay to follow a spark.
So heading the vessel trusting their sight
Are wrecked by the rocks on way to the light.
Men are wrecked on the sea, are lost on the land
When for selfish ends their journey is planned
They sink on the rocks the wild breakers sport
In the blaze of a promise, a welcome to port.
The lips of a hope that seemed circled with light
Was the door of a grave where billows unite.
The storm's grandest effort, wild laughed the sea
As the tempest went landward leaving it free.
The ship ground to pieces, waves sullenly bore
Her fruitage of trade and life to the shore.
Not life, but homes whence the living had fled
In that moment of hope that moment of dread.

Brief was the battle in that dreadful war
Which cast up dead sailors with wreckage and spar.
The wrecker toiled hard, the wrecker toiled fast,
Assured crime's harvest is short at the best.
His jetsam and flotsam he piled above tide
And the cruel sea thanked for liberal divide.

With rain, salt spray, his coarse locks were wet,
Night's fearful trouble had bleached out their jet,
While safely to land cask and parcel were drawn
Night wore away toward the grey of the dawn.
Torn clouds, darkness and tempest moved on,
Floated off on the breeze that preceded the sun.
His eyes strained for sight in that trying night
Rolled fevered and restless as increased the light.
Sadly worn with his toil, full glutted with gain,
He thought of his cavern and rest but in vain;
He willed to depart, was doomed to remain;
The knell of that warning he hears again.

The soft sky above, the sweet morning breeze,
Calms not a soul once shorn of its peace.
The very sea mocked him with strangeness and
dread

While intangible voices said, "Care for your dead".
The blood left his heart, strength oozed away,
Night torments changed with dawning of day.
He knew he must face some horrible fact
Of which he was guilty forewarned of the act.
A statue of trouble, created a man,
Made such by resisting the infinite plan.
Who ignores his conscience, perverts his reason,
Writhes in the guilt of spiritual treason.
Suspense was soon over, denouement complete
The waves a dead sailor threw at his feet.
The terrible warnings were clear as the sun
When the wrecker looked on the face of his son.
In the light of results he was sure of his facts.
Wiser far, had conviction determined his acts.
Thought unspoken hath sound for sharp spirit ears
Distinct as words man of flesh ever hears
But on earth's life's so sunk in flesh and its wants
The sweet strain is a jargon the good angel chants.

A LAMENT

One woeful night
Between two April days
The Tempter's blight
Fell on life's happy ways.

My heart of Love
He charred with passion's flame—
Took peace and purity
Left tears and shame.

The dirge of sorrow
Fills me now with pain
The sweet life dies
When innocence is slain.

I toiled for bread
And humble was my lot;
Was lonesome sometimes
Tho I murmured not

Indeed I scarce dared dream
Such life could have an end
Unless perchance one came
My lover and my friend.

Such thought is part of life
So dream we all
Base cruel dream
Since by our friends we fall.

He came youth's star
Of promise in the night
Knocked at the door of love
Robbed me outright.

My world, a desert now;
All freshness gone,
Soaked be his bread with tears
Who wrought my wrong.

He planned my fall
Taught in experience's school;
I listened, trusted,
Now, he calls me fool!

My heart's sweet soil
That grew but kindest love
Grows hate and bitterness
Can I such growth reprove?

Has justice fled to brutes?
Has mercy died?
Who says I'm worse than he,
Who to me lied?

Not pity, justice
Is the boon I crave
For him, as well as me;
This side the grave.

JENNIE AND I

O, bright were the hours of life's sunny morn
Compared to the present so sad and forlorn
For hope was abroad then with visions of light
And filled our young lives with healthy delight.
We lived, laughed, loved as though never a sigh
Should escape from the hearts of Jennie and I.

It was beauty, pleasure, contentment and joy
How little we thought of future alloy.
The hours trooped gaily, bright days glided by
Our lives were spanned by a summer-lit sky

Our hearts knew no care, our bosoms no sigh;
Cupid's bright chain circled Jennie and I.

We gathered wild flowers the fairest in May
In summer we sported upon the new hay
In autumn, wandered through forest and grove
And sang with the wild birds the songs of our love,
When winter came on and cold winds swept by
Then the hearth was a haven for Jennie and I.

But fate grew quite jealous to see us so gay
And besought brother envy to darken our day
Soon rumor was busy and with gossip to aid
Prevailed upon scandal to join in the trade
All these powers united our love did defy
And storms soon were beating on Jennie and I.

THE WAY IT WAS DONE

A wag once joked and blundered,
And people thoughtlessly laughed;
Encouraged, jesting became a fad,
And tendencies turned to the bad.

Streams of obliquity fed it
Conversation showed yawns and gaps,
Learning assumed to be freakish
Orthography swooned in collapse.

The freak took on a new value
Filched from the normal class,
The shop-talker became a leader
And dialect captured the mass.

Authors exploited beings
Who mutilated their talk.
And dowered them with ideas
Above common learned folk.

False standards injured religion
A crisis came to the church.
A slack twisted christian resulted—
A reproach to the Nazarene's worth.

A SUMMER GIRL

(A Normal Mind An Empire Is)

I knew her when life's early summers
Had tangled their gold in her hair
When life was too happy for murmurs
And her face showed no visits of care.
When lark-like she sang to the daisies
When friends like herself were sweet misses
When her heart was an eden of praises
And her mouth a confection of kisses.

I knew her when age had its innings
When mother love triumphed o'er care,
When life knows the end of beginnings,
Ups and downs, to a crown of white hair.
Husband, children—the real blessing
That makes home and life care free
Both to service and love always saying
Wife-hood, motherhood—jewels for me.

KISSES

As the south wind stirs the meadows
By its quickening breath
So our natures wake and tremble
Quickened by a kiss.

Sunny waves of life possess us
Kissing clean red lips
While a springtime's kindly rapture
Thrills our finger tips.

Hebe gave the cup at feasting
To the Gods to sip
To the earth they spilled some nectar
By a lover's slip.

Since the soul grows fat in feasting
On the palm and lip
Psyche offers you love's nectar
Prays you take a sip.

O, thou soul's sweet introduction
To a soul in bliss
Felt by trembling palms in greeting
Tasted in a kiss.

Love were mute beyond expression
In a world like this
If our speech were not augmented
By the embrace and kiss.

THE POWER OF A HUMAN LIFE

We met in the hall of fashion
Where the lights were many and bright
Touched hands became acquainted
With relish and keen delight.
A mood had bound my reason
Had enthralled my heart my will
To free myself I had tried in vain
But lacked the power, the skill.

As flowers bent by dew drops
Are freed by the kiss of day
The instant your face, your eyes
Met mine, my tyrants fled away;
And my soul was filled with sunshine
And the shadows left my brain
And the bird in my heart began to sing

The songs that follow the rain.

Then I knew the joys of the victor
That follow the ended strife
Then I knew as plants know sunshine
The power of a human life.
O friend of man, true poet!
Thou hast dwelt in every mood
The highest thoughts and hopes of the world
Have stopped in your brain to brood

And love in your heart has nested
There her kindly offspring dwell
And from tenderest throes to highest joys
Its sympathies ebb and swell.
Thou hast strength of the north to battle
In the struggle for every right
Yet sweet as to blossoms, a breeze of the south,
Are your songs to the children of night.

Like the land of eternal summer
Where birds from the winters flee;
To man is the heart of the poet,
With its boundless sympathy,
I know the fever of waiting
Has often burned in your brain
And your soul in its upward struggle
Has known the depths of pain;

For to joy you have given expression
For sorrow have found a moan
Have measured the hearts of the children of men
By laying them on your own.
Earth's dumb to thee owe tribute
For what they could never write.
To your eyes are the blind indebted
For light beyond their sight
To the prose dull ears of the many

Thou hast sent a new refrain—
Your faith and love is thawing hearts
That long in the winter have lain.
As the earth bears seed to the sower
Who knows what the harvest will be
Your sowing must bear in the hearts of men
Faith, love and sympathy.

AMONG THE HILLS

When autumn sunsets burn along the west
And purple mists float in the quiet air
I shun the city called by hills to rest
While dogs and hunters to the woods repair.
From busy city, village, train and mill
Confused a drowsy noise the valleys fill.

This disembodied throbbing would you analyse
Telling of struggles in the life we prize?
It is life, the living force of shops set free
Adding a tired monotone to air and sea.
Headlong the April brook flows silent now,
On distant lake the spectral sail moves slow
Parting the golden vapors of the day
In paths, like dreams cut from this world away.

Each distance has an invitation of its own
When dying nature puts her glories on.
The days are pictorial, night vies with day;
The argent moon rolls on her queenly way.
In fields phosphoric stars and planets move
Comets and meteors burn their paths above.
Height, width and depth profound display
The boundless goodness of immensity.

LILIES OF THE VALLEY

(With a Birthday Letter)

Go sweet buds and greet my darling
 Please her much,
Open wide and shed your fragrance
 At her touch.
Tell her how the heart in sweetness,
 Grows its love.
To her, fragments of earth, beauty
 This, pray prove.
Show how little acts of kindness
 Wide apart
Mark in every life the pathway
 To the heart.

Out of wintry mould and darkness
 You have come
Making glad with scent and beauty
 Your low home;
So in hearts of fleshliest fashion
 Love once born
Dates the soul's eternal living
 From that morn.
Thence the heart grows buds of kindness
 Spite of storm.

Over hills and vales you scattered,
 Day by day,
Till my grace hath found you, bound you,
 One boquet—
E'en so, human hearts—law governed
 From above
Grace, two choosing from the many,
 Binds in love

Go then dowered rich in blessing
Swift depart
Earth and sun and God's love letters
To the heart.

IMMORTALITY

standing by a grave I said
Where are they the loved and dead?
The spirit clothing made of clay
Was all that here was laid away.

How often since this mound was made
My thoughts have pierced the gloomy shade;
And where the spirit currents swell
I met my friends alive and well;
And in communion rich and sweet
Our hearts in unison have beat,
My doubts and fears all swiftly fled
And peace abode with me instead.

The body changes form in death
But spirit has immortal breath
Forever growing, never grown;
Each God-like act a star in crown.
No planet cycle marks the years
Beyond the wreck of worlds and spheres.
It lives, the soul with freed souls dwell,
Forever done with cap and bell.

In God's great bosom pure and sweet
What future happiness to meet
The faces lost, redeemed from pain
The hearts of love by rude acts slain.
In friendship truth and love to bask
Forever done with cloak and mask.

THE RESULT

I have toiled in the fields of mind
Until brain is weary with thought
Discouraged, have failed to find
Much truth for which I wrought.
My ears are dull with age,
My eyes are growing dim;
Patient, O heart, beyond this stage
Love calls, faith leads to Him.

THE SIMPLE LIFE

Under the trees on the grassy lawn
Shadows dance in the breeze and sun;
There song birds sing a roundelay
Of nesting hopes as spring goes by;
And toil's made easy day by day
Tho burdens grow with nestling's cry.

As I looked and pondered, my spirit saw
The wondrous sweep of mighty law
That poises the planets in empty space,
And holds all things in loving embrace.

The law of pleasure was part of the plan
Excess and trouble and pain left out.
One law for the life of bird and man
A simple life with never a doubt.

A wondrous law of sex and life
That roofs with love the home, the nest,
That mingles song with toil and strife
Paying well done with after rest.

The summer growth, the after rest,
To grass and shrub and forest tall

Yields benediction sweet and blest
In royal beauty crowning all.

Great mandate of creative mind
That gave one law to high and low.
Let offspring after its own kind
Unharm'd by chance forever grow.

Let age and youth together live
One family in home and nest
Goodness all evil shall survive
To live together then is best.

For in communion kind with kind
The common weal is best attained.
Love lightens labor, sweetens mind
And earth's felicity is gained.

I learn from birds, that toil and song
Make happy duties common way,
That flesh to nature plans belong,
And love makes life a holiday.

Sweetness of youth o'erlaps old age
As strength supplies the yearling's need ;
Each sharing its own heritage
Receiveth greater things instead.

TO SAMUEL SPRECKER, D. D., LL. D.

To you I came a callow youth,
Self willed, purblind ;
You led me into fields of truth,
Enthroned the mind,
Memory enshrines you in my heart,
The wise, the kind.

My sky with youth dreams was ablaze;
You cleared the light,
Expelled the doubt, the fear, the haze,
Enlarged my sight.
May all your sky thro' coming years
With love be bright.

OUR MASTERS

Who is my master, I ask the flesh,
It replies, thy wants rise ever afresh.
Who is my master, I ask the ear,
It answers, all harmonies sweet and clear.
Who is my master, I ask the eye,
Beauty, frail beauty is its reply.
Who is my master, I ask the brain,
It answers, the phantoms you chase in vain.
Who are my masters, I ask the heart,
And its drowsy desires rouse and start
And in mingled jargon love, and fame,
And wealth, and pride, the answers came.
Who are my masters, the answer's clear
Thy neighbors ready to praise or sneer.
Aye, public opinion burdens each back
Fear and ignorance cripples each act.
The cut of a coat, the shade of a tie,
The force of a laugh, the slip of a sigh,
Are frictions of fashion that fever the brain;
That rob it of pleasure and fill it with pain.
Acadian life is a dream of the past,
The life of today is a feverish gasp.
Years run to waste, often brief is the span
Productive of acts that are worthy of man.

THE ORATORIO OF NATURE

The beauty of woman shall fade;
The strength of man shall fail;
Birth and death is the medley played;
And the harp of nature is frail.
True forever of matter at strife
That forever in change is wrought;
But eternal is the anthem of life
Thrummed by immortal thought.

The anthem is loud and clear
To those who dwell on the high
Is pure and sweet to the ravished ear
Of a soul with its Lord in sight.
The song of the spheres above
Growth and decay below;
Earth's endless dance of death and Life,
And ocean's ceaseless flow.

Storm, torrent and thunder roar;
Each dawn with showers of gold;
Choral of birds and din of war
And sounds that are manifold.
Great sunsets burning the clouds;
The meteors track of fire
Are symphonies grand to ears attuned
To the sweep of nature's lyre.

Aye, nature in all her moods
Hints of wisdom beyond earth's beach;
While spirits unseen, endeavor unheard
To utter some higher speech.
Her lessons on matter are clear
But of more than matter they teach;
He must listen with soul, not ear,
Who would grasp what is out of reach.

ALL THE WAYS O' LIFE ARE GOOD

The dazzling prizes that I looked upon,
Forever failed me and seemed farther on.
So wrapped and earnest was my quest,
Men saw my shining face
And called me blest.

Life's common fields that stretched
Along the way
Eclipsed and darkened seemed
As oft the sun
When veiled its light
From all it shone upon.

At last o'ertaken by the coming night
When weariness and waste of strength
And dimness of the sight
Compels to rest;
As all must learn at length.

It dawns upon us all too late
That all the way was good;
Save in the past it was not understood.
That all the way we trod
From our low start—
Led through the fields of God.

That wayside blossoms bursting into bloom,
Come day by day
Fresh from the master's mind;
Design, color, sweetness, all combined
As fabrics from some loom.
And yet we fare abroad
And idly, ignorantly roam
To feed on truths
That cluster fresh at home.

OBSCURITY

How hard it is in this every day life,
To live in contentment alone,
To win the smallest conquest from strife,
If victory's trump be unblown.

How hard to live on a short back street,
Where callers in carriages never come;
Though cottage and yard be ever so neat,
Pride poisons life with a bitter scum.

Ambition, yes, every one labors and hopes
For wealth, position and fame.
The sweetest bud of joy that ope's,
Is the love of a deathless name.

ANTAGONISMS

The mountains are big with dread;
The valleys with dead abound;
Grim dangers lurk in each path we tread,
And safety seems nowhere found.

A thunderbolt leaps from the sky;
Rives forests, in death strews the plain;
Malaria steals from the swamps,
And by "fade away" millions are slain.

We shrink from the hiss of a snake;
Lose temper at bite of a fly,
While mote, mosquito or gnat, can make
Life's currents run arid and dry.

Life feeds upon life in the mass;
Earth is but the dust of the dead;
The waters war with excess;
Life's history is dying and dead.

Yet out of the dust of the dead,
Wisdom weaves every garment of life;
What is nature's story when read,
Save living, loving and strife.

THE WIND AND THE PINES

The wind and the pines all day long
Have swept the limits of endless song
And my soul is full of the highest joy
That earth can give to man or boy.
For treading the forest depths I heard
The pipes of Pan with melody stirred;
I breathed the tonic the north wind brings
And quaffed the nectar of sylvan springs;
At autumn's banquet on nature's heart
Reclined, where body and soul take part.

I saw the roots of earth's secret springs
And felt the beat of the heart of things.
For all day long the wind and the trees
Have played the grandest of melodies
On nature's organ so vast and grand
Fitted to songs creation planned.
Thru pipes storm swept—tempered by suns;
From trunk to leaf the gamut runs.
The forest choir with resinous breath
Sings ever of life, sings ever of death.
A gummy fatness embalms the air

And lifts the soul on wings of prayer.
One hears in moss and lichen and tree,
The still small voice of Deity.
I have tested sympathy, such as is found
In the hearts of men in country and town
But a purer companionship far than these
Is found in a forest of living trees.

Where nature has coverts for wolf and fawn
And the woodman's life is a lengthened dawn

An Acadian life near nature's heart
Unspoiled by the rules of camp or court.
For body and soul sweet health is found,
Where air and water and light abound.
And life's best wine sinks not to the lees
Where simple pleasures forever please.

SEEN BY THE WAY

(After a Night of Sleet)

As we came home from Martinsville,
December nineteen six,
Beauty encamped on plain and hill,
In tents of Borean tricks.
Ice crystals jeweled shrub and tree,
Spread cunning frost-maid filagree
On stubble, weed, as if to see
How charming homely things might be,
When decked in winter tapestry.

All night before, ice witches
Wove rich robes of crystal fine,
And hung them over switches,
Fence, stump and clinging vine.
The swaying elm, the switchy beach,
The dead oak, sturdy, cold,
Each had a fashion, style and speech,
Vain mortals fain would hold.

The north wind wantoned all around,
Caressing shrub and bough;
Showering and shaking splendor down,
To brighten things below.
The somber crow on midnight wing,
Flew o'er the ice-like sea;
Herd, dog and hunter, wondering,
Charmed, silent seemed to be.

And as our urban car sped thru
The scenes erst wintry bare;
Light as from diamonds, blossomed
And vanished everywhere.
Nature most prodigal of wealth,
Exhausted winter's store,
To make the earth more beautiful
Than summer had before.
Ever the seasons come and go,
Each vieing with the other,
To make the earth more beautiful
And honor the All Father.

NIAGARA

(The Fall of Table-rock)

A whisper comes out of the past,
From the ages when terra was young;
That the Devil to make his fame last,
Set to drown the Small Voice in song.

So he carved great Niagara's bed
And started the hydraulic choir;
But the Voice grew mighty and sped,
Filling space with multiplied power.

Chagrined at the fate of his plan;
In wrath, ever since, he has tried
To silence these mouths, if he can,
By tumbling the rocks inside.

THE UPWARD STRUGGLE

The longer I live and the more I see
Of souls that struggle to'ard heights above,
The stronger this truth comes home to me;
The Universe rests on the shoulders of love;
A love so infinite, deep and broad,
That men rename it, and call it God.

THE COLUMBIA RIVER

If there were no gods—
O river so free!
I should yield to temptation
And worship thee.

Thou dost water the fields,
Putting life into wheels
That turn ever sturdily
Grinding the meals

For the children of life;
Suiting songs to the mouth
Giving strength to each arm;
Friend to everything living,
Guardian from harm.

Refreshing myself on
Thy bosom and banks
I feel it my duty
To give thee my thanks.

All life is refreshed as
It drinks and bathes,
Yielding songs of joy
Abounding in praise.

TO WHOM DO YOU BOW?

Some worship the god of yellow corn
Some worship a cotton king;
Sun, water, soil, man's servitors,
Soul, body, needs many a thing
To refresh, supply waste energy
And give strength for battling.

The fight is on in the business world;
Each must pay for a place to stand.
Equality, liberty, statesmen's dreams!
How the social chasms expand;

The earth was made for the human race
Made beautiful, roomy, well planned.

Select your idol and sail your seas
Sail on, till your journey's done—
But stand for the right in every fight,
Be patient, be just and brave;
Give to the world the best you have—
Thus continents are won.

PLENTY OF ROOM

There is room in the world for you today
There is room for each to have his say;
Bluff says, all is crowded—overdone—
That the press is swamped by an over run
That genius is dwarfed; the pen undone;
That greatness is dead on the heights it won.
All commercially dead.

Unwelcome news, if really true,
I waive you back to the realms of woe,
Business, not soul, is measured by gold,
A higher value great thoughts hold.
O world of man, worth makes it so!
Each day holds room for the soul to grow;
The true, the beautiful, everywhere found—
Declares that wisdom knows no bound.

Obey God's edict and go to work!
(It matters little—use knife or fork)
But of honest labor do your share
And you will have plenty, with friends to spare.
They mostly are tramps who will not work
Parasites they who grumble and shirk.
Get rid of the boss and the autocrat
Read your Bible, learn what God's at.

CHRISTMAS TIME

Again the happy Christmas tide
Has set the world in motion
Along the streets the people glide
In throngs, a human ocean.
The wintry air vibrates with life
Faces and eyes look eager,
Does bargain hunting cause the strife,
Or are life's good things meager?
No, pleasure pulses in each breast
With memories true and tender;
Friends that are sundered east or west
All kindly now remember.

No longer overhead is heard
That angel choir singing
Yet earth holds sacred every word
When Christmas bells are ringing.
The time of peace has not yet come
Tho earth is old and hoary;
The fields of Mars have widened some
And all his crops are gory.
King Christmas brings a happy reign
Tho many days are evil;
We fill our hearts with joy again
Our thoughts grow kind and civil.

It is worth eleven months at least
To feel one's heart-blood tingle
Tho brief, superlative the feast
When at our best we mingle.
Love bursts to bloom in happy words
And friendships shared grow stronger
When talk and jest and song accords
We give and take and laugh and wish,
The happy hours were longer;

Fond memory treasures what is best,
Hope keeps our life blood flowing.

Along life's journey much we've missed
And much we still remember
Roses of June were sunshine kist—
Old yule-fires cheer December.
So let us count our loss and gain
Before the year is ended
And fearless sail life's stormy main
Tho smiles and tears are blended.
The storms of life will soon be past
The clouds away be drifted;
The fadeless skies will show at last,
When present fogs are lifted.
I send you kindest greeting, friends,
Perchance, tho not your debtor—
God bless you every one, so ends,
My lengthy Christmas Letter.

ALL ARE TRAMPS

Uneven the road and heavy the track,
This life journey entered, no one may turn back;
Civilians and soldiers in houses and camps
After gain, after fame, from birth—all are tramps.
Men are born with limits of station, health,
Of family, nation, of poverty, wealth.
Inherited burdens man's liberty cramps
Both in joy and sorrow as onward he tramps.

Choose we science, hard labor, poetry, art,
Man ever is weary and hungry at heart.
The mountains are chilly, the vales full of damp
After rest, after comfort all men are tramps.
The rich toil for honor, the poor for bread
For great, for little, by want all are led.

The blind ask a leader, the seeing need lamps,
After much, after little—all, all are tramps.

How narrow our vision, our wisdom how small;
Does an awkward life journey, a grave end it all?
Look aloft, be wise, keep oil in your lamps
For good or evil, to'ard judgment we are tramps.

THE PROMISE

Let the Woman's heel, he said,
Henceforth bruise the serpent's head.
When every foe is dead at last
Man shall recover Eden lost.
Till then, the fight 'twixt good and ill
Let every creature wage with will.

Goodness abounds inviting, sweet,
While evil's kept beneath the feet.
The Hero's triumph each may feel
Who treads on wrong—rights with his heel.
Cheat not your heart, nor boast a flaw,
God reigns and will fulfill all Law.

Quit ye like men of old and feel
His promise to the woman's heel.
Brave Achilles felt death's steel
Where Styx no armor gave his heel.
The giant's blood armed Siegfried over,
Save where one leaf clave to his shoulder,

Which in his harness left a door
Thru which his life fled like a star.
Balder the beautiful in days of old
Had love's best pledge (we're told)
From everything, save mistletoe,
That blind boys harmless plant
Under which lovers kiss and happy meet.

Even mother love saw in that plant no harm,
But all accord to it a Lover's charm.
Yet shaped an arrow, fitted to a bow,
Blind Hoerder shoots. The beautiful lays low.
Balder's sweet Soul was doomed to shades below.
A broader promise than a giant's blood
A broader promise than the stygian flood
Man has in Christ, assuring wealth of good.

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS

Ring on, O Bells of Joy!
Till Israel shall confess
The Christ; once Bethlehem's Boy
Is Christ—the world to bless.

Gift ever new—tho story old—
The Israel Miracles manifold.
It cost God much to lead them out,
Cost more to bring them in.

Egypt to Canaan—Type no doubt
Of sinners saved from sin.
The many works to save them wrought
Were scarcely done before forgot.

Fame, country lost, abroad they grope their way,
With Christ left out, observe our Christmas Day.
Surpassing strange, even Judah should forget—
Christ's star hath risen nevermore to set.

O, blind indifference to Love Divine—
In current books we often find
His works belittled, only brought to mind
To grace some romance of the common kind.

THE VOICE OF NATURE

[Camp Petrel, Adirondacks, N. Y.]

From the camp fire, sparks shot upward,
Ambitious to visit the stars;
They perished in fields of vapor
None passing our cloudland bars.

Stars widened the upper spaces
And bathed them in gentle light
As I looked and apprehended
The lessons of the night.

Like camp fires are nations consuming—
And every man has a soul
Sending its hope sparks upward
To some heaven, its final goal.

The winds on their way to the cities
Bear blessings from plants and trees,
O, Rulers, learn wisdom from nature,
Send them friendship, love, rest, peace.

SING ON

*[Many are the birds that sing among the graves,
Many their losses and bereavements, yet they still
sing on]*

I sang to my soul in sorrow
When I saw the roses fall
And nature staged her mystery,
The fate that waits upon all.
I sang for my heart grew lonely
As hands and faces were missed,
For some loved voice fled forever
From lips no more to be kissed.
I noted the wealth of the Nations,

Of life I computed the sum,
Home, shop and grave—great stations,
Man's journey under the sun.
Ambitions, love, tears, laughter,
Life's amazing yield, when done.

I sang to my soul in sorrow
In the swellings of manhood's prime,
For the cares of life are many
And sharp is the tooth of time.
Great aims we prize in the distance,
Grow pale as we journey on;
Is it the struggle for existence?
As neared their charms seem gone.
I sang, for song gives courage
When the battle is fierce and dread;
When the heart is hot and restless
And fields are stubbled and dead.
I paused as the conflict slackened,
Considered the gain all told,
And found the lessons golden—
Life's blessings are manifold.

I sang to my soul in autumn
As the sun nears the afterglow,
When the past is a memory showing
The efforts of long ago.
I am learning the song of triumph,
For promises grow more bright
As we near the silent river
And enter the shades of night.
For the soul in the nearing distance
Sees the grey of the coming day,
Eternity's dawn in splendor
Breaking just over the way.
And joins in the song of triumph—
Jubilatta! all victories won.
Earth's voice sinks sweet into silence
At the Master's words—Well done.

NAPLES

An April Sabbath camps upon thy hills;
Business is hushed—the ocean air is chill.
From out blue skies the sun's soft light
Affords grand views from Posillipo's hill.

Where Solfatara stood and belched
From lava-lips her many molten floods
Only a valley now is seen; low, grandeurless;
Skirted by brambles blown from stunted woods,

Long ranked satanic terror of the world.
The Centuries stole thy light, thy might and now
Beyond the city and the bay, volcanic throes declare
Thy mantle dread, rests on Vesuvius brow.

O Naples, City of delights! thy thoroughfares
Shouldered by Alps, borne to the heights
Whence men may note thy daily toils and cares
And see thee wanton with the enchantress night.

Dig thy lap's dust—old cities reappear—
Pompeii, Herculaneum, Cumae, Baia
Rise from their graves, the past is here,
Its wealth, pleasure, wisdom, folly ours today.

Here from death's house (buttressed by centuries)
Come Caesar, Piso, Pompey, Cicero, Marius,
Virgil, Tasso, Horace, Paul, Seneca and others
Across the mighty summits sloping down to us.

Epochs of ruin thou hast known; yet kept
The step of progress, while thine eyes have wept.
Triumphs in art and music thou dost own;
Many thy treasures, hence world tourists come.

Greece nurtured thee a thousand years.

Then thou, Parthenope changed name, wast wed
To Rome and since, by bloody handed Mars
Hast time and time again been widowed.

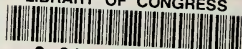
Naples, Neapolis, O city old yet new;

Youth, beauty, strength are with thee evermore.
Thy children, blest with loveliness—
Sorento, Capri, Ischia, thy jewels Kohinoor.

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